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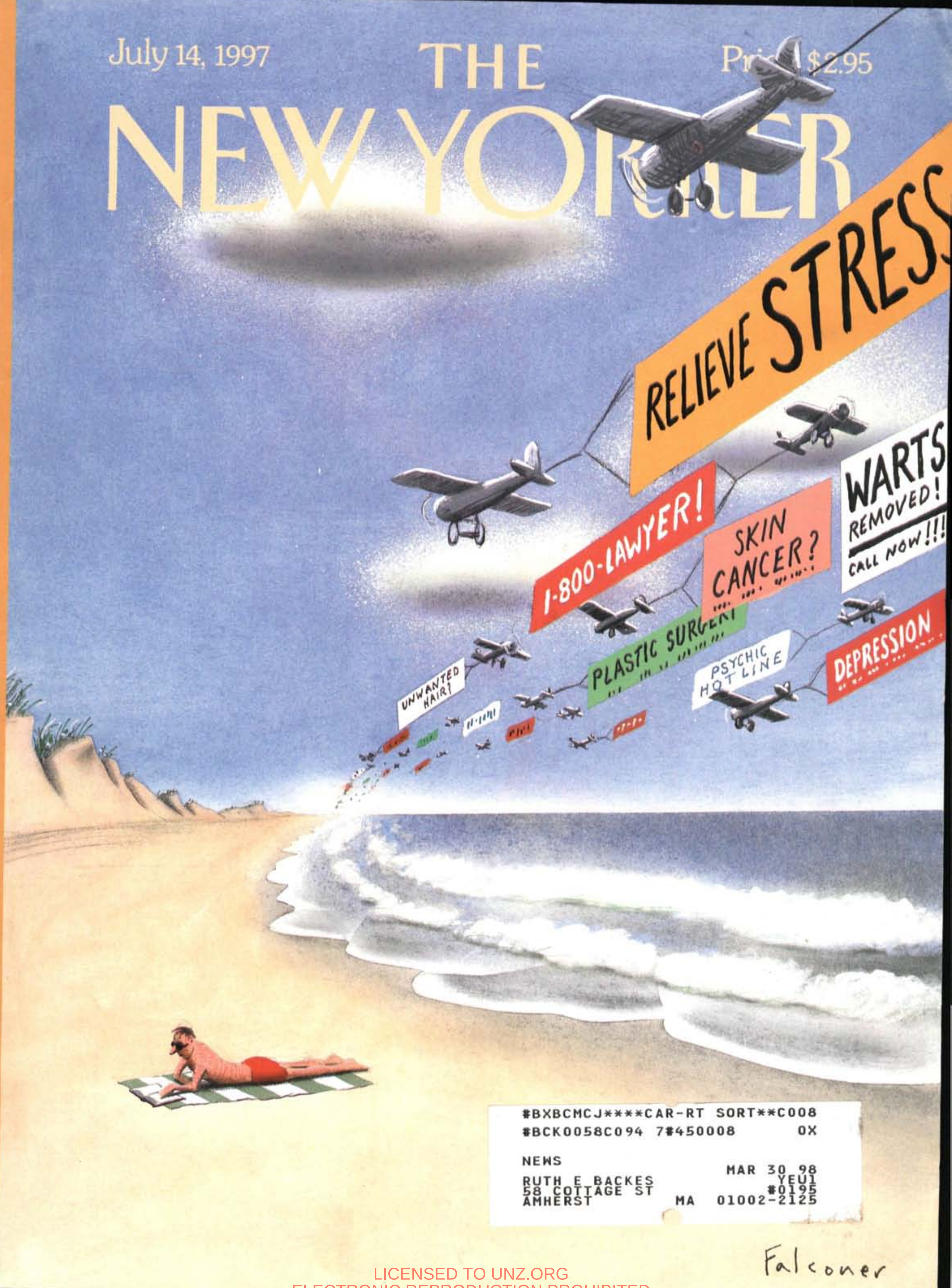

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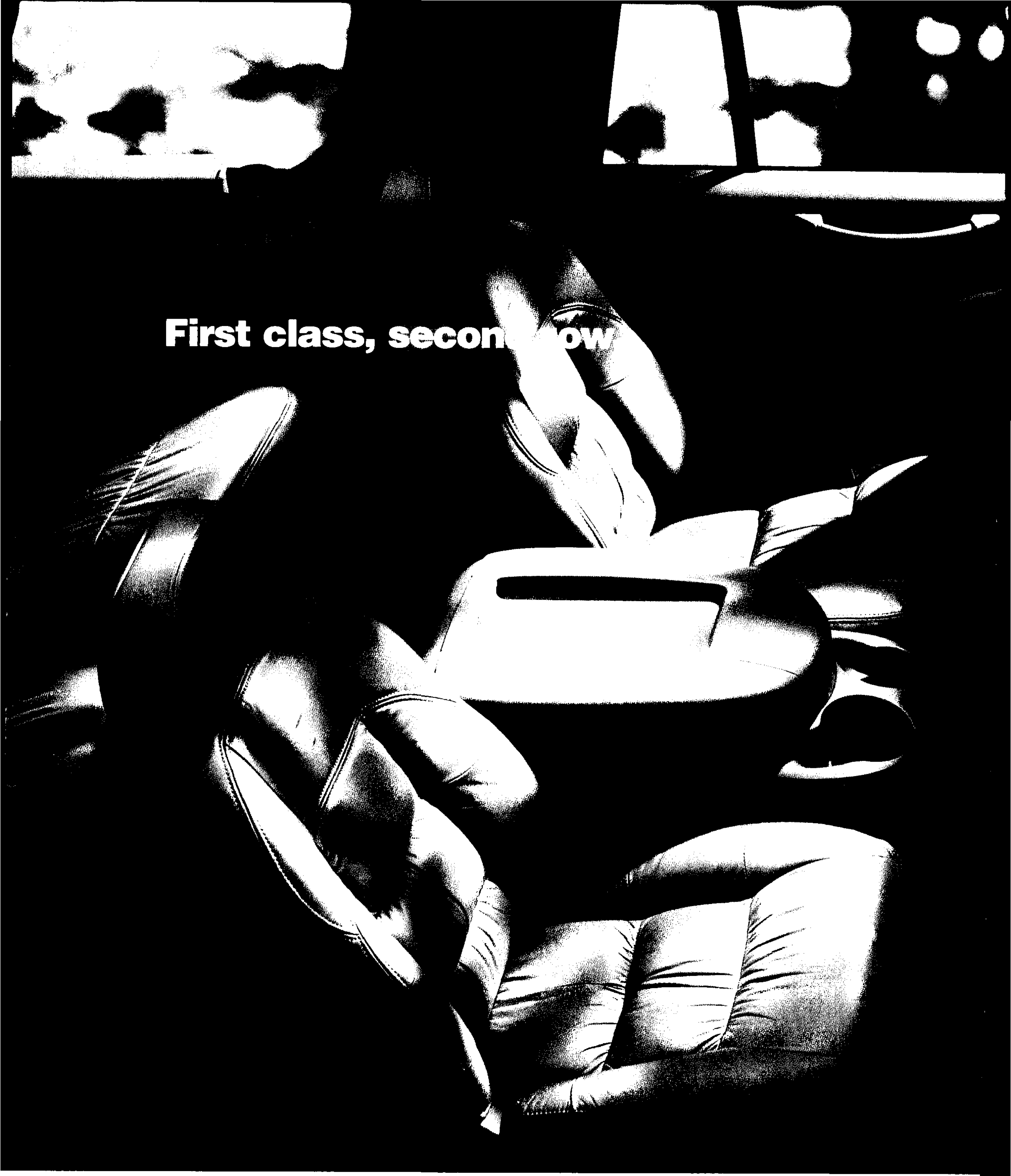

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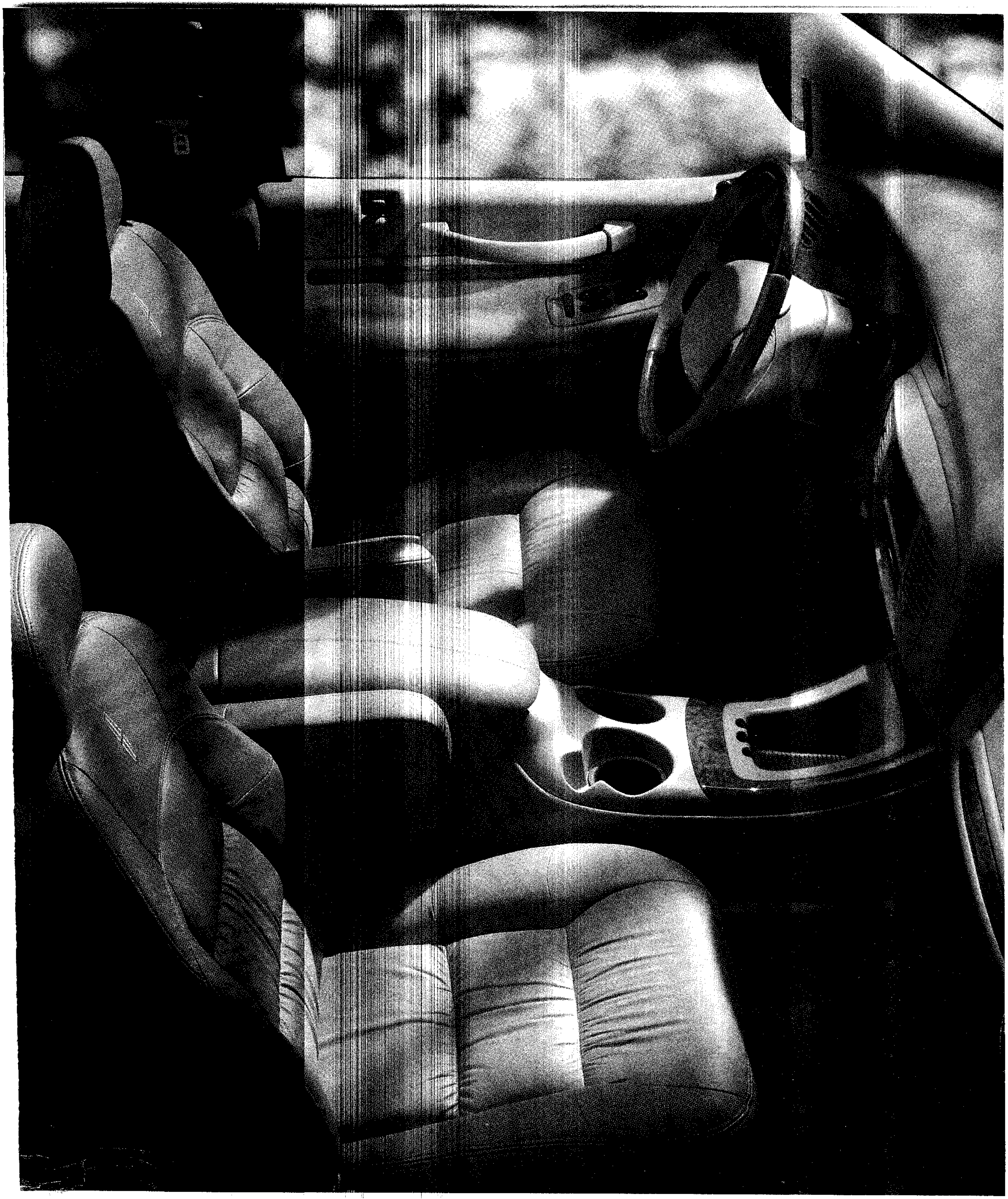

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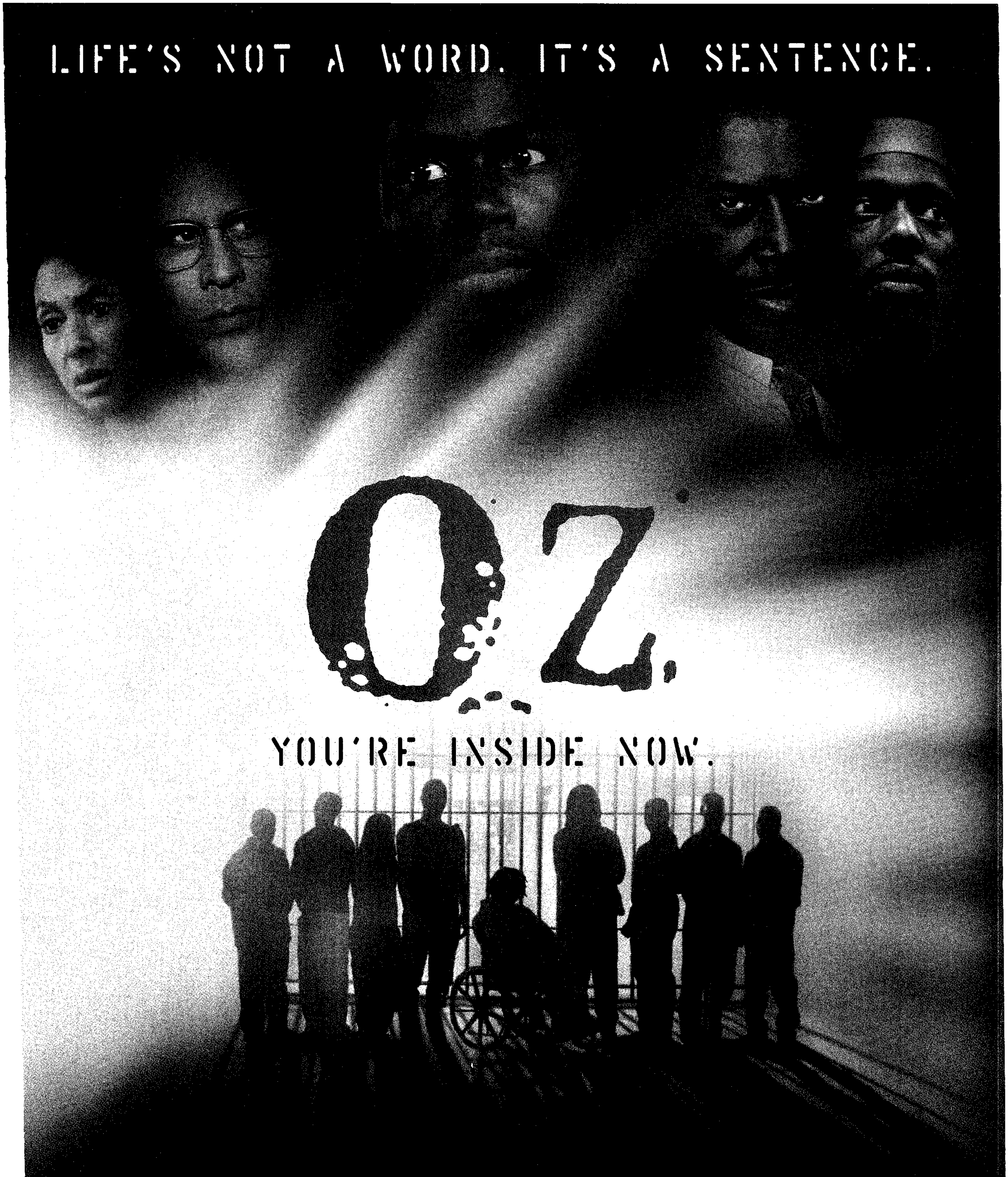
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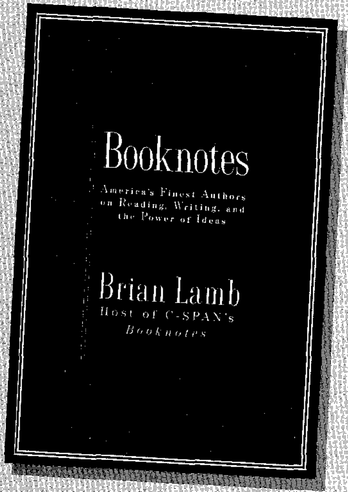

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THE NEW YORKER

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COMMENT

CREW NOT EXPENDABLE

Why Pathfinder is not a Mir device.

THOUGH Mars may offer more of the romance of exploration, and Mir may provide more human interest, spare a spacey thought for Mathilde. She's not much to look at, perhaps—a dented lump of rock half as big as Hawaii and twice as dark as charcoal—but now, for the first time, those who want to look at her can. Their benefactor is a little spaceship called NEAR, for Near Earth Asteroid Rendezvous. On June 27th, NEAR passed by Mathilde (whose full name is Asteroid 253 Mathilde) at a brisk pace en route to a liaison in 1999 with another asteroid, Eros, which it will accompany on a tour of the inner solar system for a couple of years, and as it zipped past Mathilde it took a series of snapshots for the folks back home. While asteroid buffs may tease subtle novelties from the images—Mathilde is only the third asteroid ever photographed in detail, and the first with her particular sooty complexion—their importance to the wider world is more fiscal than astronomical: by the standards of such things, these pix came cheap.

NEAR is the first of a new generation of spacecraft for exploring the solar system. Mars Pathfinder, which hits its target on July 4th, is the second. By the time this sees print, you will know whether Pathfinder—having been slowed from its interplanetary speed by a couple of little retrorockets and the feeble friction of the Martian atmosphere, which is about as thick as the foam on a day-old glass of beer—survived its precipitous plunge to the surface. It used to be that planetary probes would go into stately orbit around their destinations and then lower themselves gently to the surface; now they screech into place like cars in a valet parking lot. Part of the charm of Pathfinder, NEAR, and their successors is that they dispense with the niceties. They can afford to; that's the point of being cheap.

Cheap is a relative term here. The spacecraft for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Discovery class missions, of which these are the first two, carry price tags of up to a hundred and fifty million dollars each. Throw in the price of a rocket launch and then the running costs, and these missions can be two-hundred-million-dollar propositions. This is undeniably a lot of money, but it is far less than their recent predecessors cost. In the nineteen-seventies and eighties, expense and an unreliable space shuttle meant

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that planetary missions became fewer and farther between. The rarer they got, the more instruments were loaded onto them. More instruments meant a bigger loss in case of failure, so more safeguards were added. All this drove up costs. Rarity begot bloat, bloat begot expense, expense begot rarity. NASA launched only three missions to other planets between 1979 and NEAR's lift-off a year ago February.

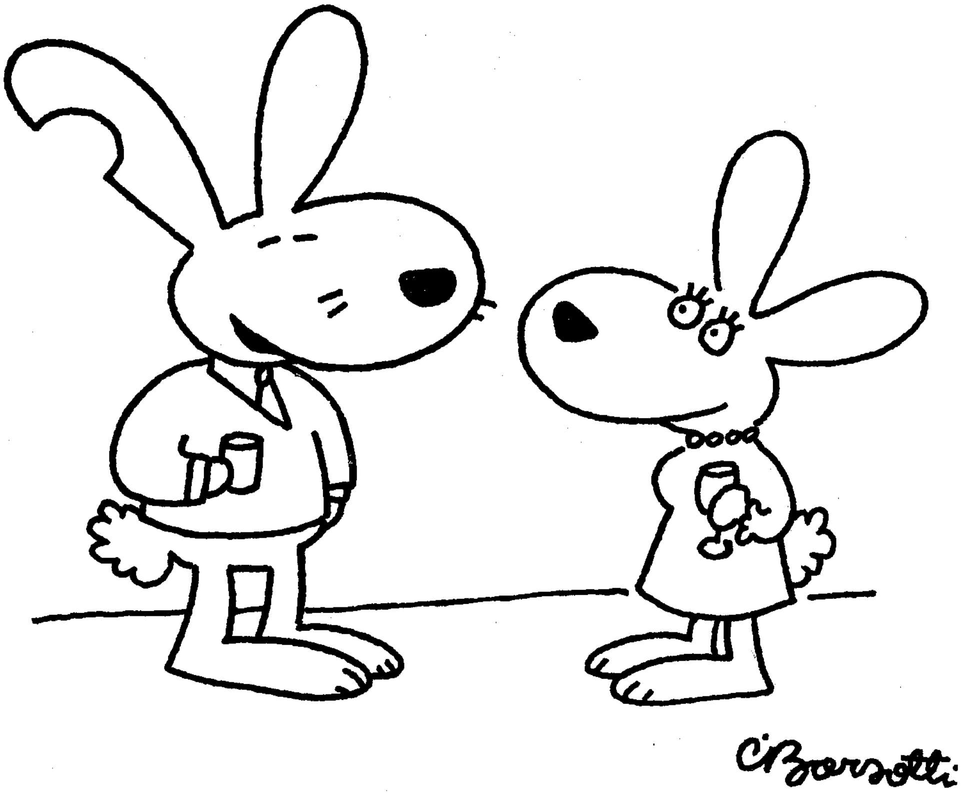
Discovery missions like NEAR and Mars Pathfinder are meant to reverse the bloat and replace a vicious circle with a virtuous one. Smaller spacecraft mean cheaper spacecraft; cheaper spacecraft mean more spacecraft; more spacecraft mean a higher level of acceptable risk; a higher level of acceptable risk means a greater opportunity to take technological chances, pushing the boundary that defines the state of the art; and that, in turn, makes smaller spacecraft capable of more things.

Not all of these technological delights have been realized, but the trend is clear. Ever cheaper and more effective spacecraft are trundling toward the launching pads. Daniel Goldin, who has been NASA's administrator since 1992, endlessly exhorts and browbeats his workforce to do more with less. (His eagerness to reinvent NASA's way of doing things is one reason that he is the only senior Bush Administration appointee still in place.) Similar changes are afoot in the commercial world. The demand for commercial satellites is greater than ever before, and so is the capacity for making and launching them. The Iridium satellite phone system has put twelve of the things into orbit since May; five more are due up on July 9th. Competition between satellite-makers is forcing a pace of innovation which would have been considered far too risky a few years ago. Now people realize that there are worse things than making a mistake. One of them is failing to innovate. Another is spending large sums to "failure-proof" a machine and then launching it on top of what is basically a skyscraper made of high explosive. This process goes wrong about one time in twelve. Nor do the risks end with the rocket launch; a French satellite was lost in a collision with a piece of space debris last year, and a Japanese one was similarly lost last week. Risk goes with the territory; but, given the capacity for building replacements, so what?

As this attitude spreads, we can expect to see a marked increase in the pace of spacecraft evolution. As new technologies hook up fleets of satellites like an Internet of the sky, little Discovery missions and their successors will spread out across the solar system. But there is one area where this new approach cannot succeed: that of Goldin's biggest budget item, which is manned space flight. Taking risks with robots is one thing, and doing the same with people is quite another. Astronauts and cosmonauts like those now bravely lashing Mir back together with chewing gum and string know and accept the dangers of their profession. They are doubtless realistic about the risk of, say, losing a second shuttle in the next decade—a risk that appears to be about forty per cent—but no one is going to suggest increasing the dangers they face as a way of reducing costs and increasing the rate of innovation.

It's not just that such a suggestion would be inhumane and politically impossible; it would also be silly. A data-gathering mission like NEAR is a means to an end, but manned space flight is an end in itself. There are men and women in space because politicians and the public seem to like having them there, not because they do very much to expand the frontiers of knowledge. One day, no doubt, people will venture beyond earth orbit and do useful or entertaining or profitable things elsewhere in the solar system. For the moment, though, human space flight is basically a holding operation, a life-support system for a dream of flight. Turn it off, its proponents say, and the dream will die.

If manned space flight has so little to recommend it that generations yet to come, enjoying the benefits of greater wealth and better technology, would not be moved to return to it, is it really worth keeping? This argument is sterile. Barring early disaster or an unexpected political volte face, the next phase of manned space flight—a new international space station circling the earth—now seems certain to get started next year. And it may indeed keep some aspirations alive. But it will not reveal new truths about the universe or develop many new technologies. For all that intrepid and irreplaceable astronauts may keep a toe on the threshold of the solar system, Mathilde, Mars, and its other wonders do not yet belong to them. Rather, they are the province of ever more disposable, ever more capable robots. —OLIVER MORTON



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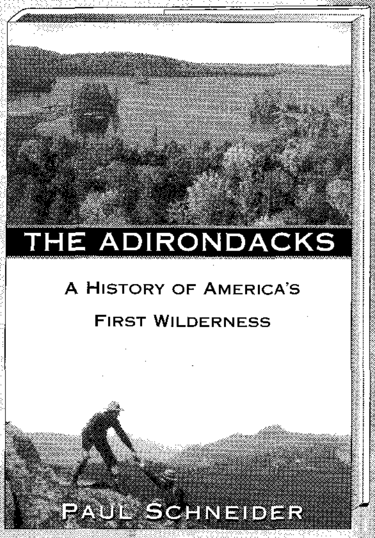

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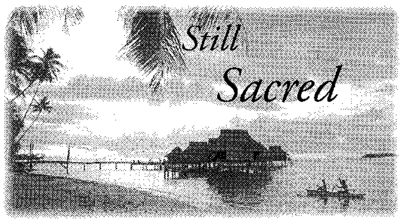
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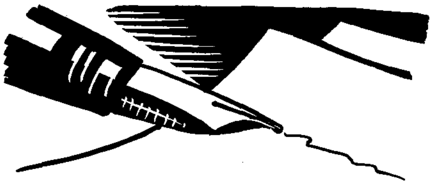


QUESTIONING ESTROGEN

Malcolm Gladwell does all women a disservice with his recent polemic in favor of estrogen ("The Estrogen Question," June 9th). He oversimplifies an important topic, characterizing a cautious approach to the prophylactic use of drugs as the language of "personal fulfillment." Because of space constraints, I will limit my comments to the question of statistics.

Gladwell suggests that I have confused the death rates from breast cancer and heart disease in women under seventy-five. Although these statistics are not critical to a woman's decision about hormone therapy, they can help frame the risk/benefit analysis between the promotion of breast cancer and the potential prevention of heart disease. If Gladwell had thought to ask me about the difference between my numbers and those of Meir Stampfer, I could have told him, without embarrassment, that my numbers came from Stampfer's own Nurses' Health Study. As opposed to the National Center for Health Statistics data that Gladwell quotes, the Nurses' Health Study distinguishes between deaths from coronary heart disease, the condition that estrogen is supposed to help, and those caused by other forms of cardiovascular heart disease. According to the data previously published by Stampfer and his colleagues, there are more deaths from breast cancer than from heart disease over the eighteen years of follow-up. The exact figures vary depending on whether you are looking at smokers (most premature heart disease is in smokers) or nonsmokers. In the healthy-fifty-year-old-nonsmoker category, there are three times as many deaths from breast cancer as from heart disease. I propose that this is the population closest to the perimenopausal woman contemplating taking estrogen.

One reason for the discrepancy in numbers has to do with the fact that the Nurses' Health Study data include only women who started the study without heart disease or breast cancer, while the general-population statistics include everyone. In addition, nurses tend to have a healthier life style than women generally. The fact that the breast-cancer deaths are about the same but the heart-disease deaths are lower than those of the general population demonstrates that heart disease can be prevented by a life-style approach, while breast cancer cannot.

In the most recent analysis of this study, published in the June 19, 1997, *New England Journal of Medicine*, there are equivalent numbers of deaths from breast cancer and from coronary heart disease below the age of seventy-three. In addition, the benefits of hormone therapy are attenuated after ten years, when the increased deaths from breast cancer become significant. This study demonstrates once again that statistics on this topic are a moving target, and that women need to monitor the studies on hormone therapy and be prepared to revisit their choices.

My point, one that I reiterate in my book, is that when we are talking about prevention as opposed to treatment we should have a higher threshold for potential risk. And menopause is not a disease that requires treatment. Women have options. In the Nurses' Health Study, the women who were fit nonsmokers with normal cholesterol and blood pressure had no statistically significant mortality advantage from hormone therapy. The first approach to prevention should be life-style changes, and only if they are impossible or inadequate should we consider drugs.

SUSAN M. LOVE, M.D., F.A.C.S.
Adjunct Professor of Surgery,
U.C.L.A. Medical School
Los Angeles, Calif.

Malcolm Gladwell replies:

I am grateful to Susan Love for finally providing the provenance of her mysterious mortality statistics. When she claimed that women were three times as likely to die of breast cancer as of heart disease, Love now tells us, she didn't really mean to refer to all American women. She was referring only to a handful of American women who happened to have been included in the Nurses' Health Study. And she didn't really mean to suggest that these statistics referred to the experience of the *average* American woman. She meant that they would reflect your risks if you were just like the women in the Nurses' Study; and those women, as the study itself states explicitly in its conclusion, aren't average at all. They have a far lower incidence of heart disease than American women as a whole.

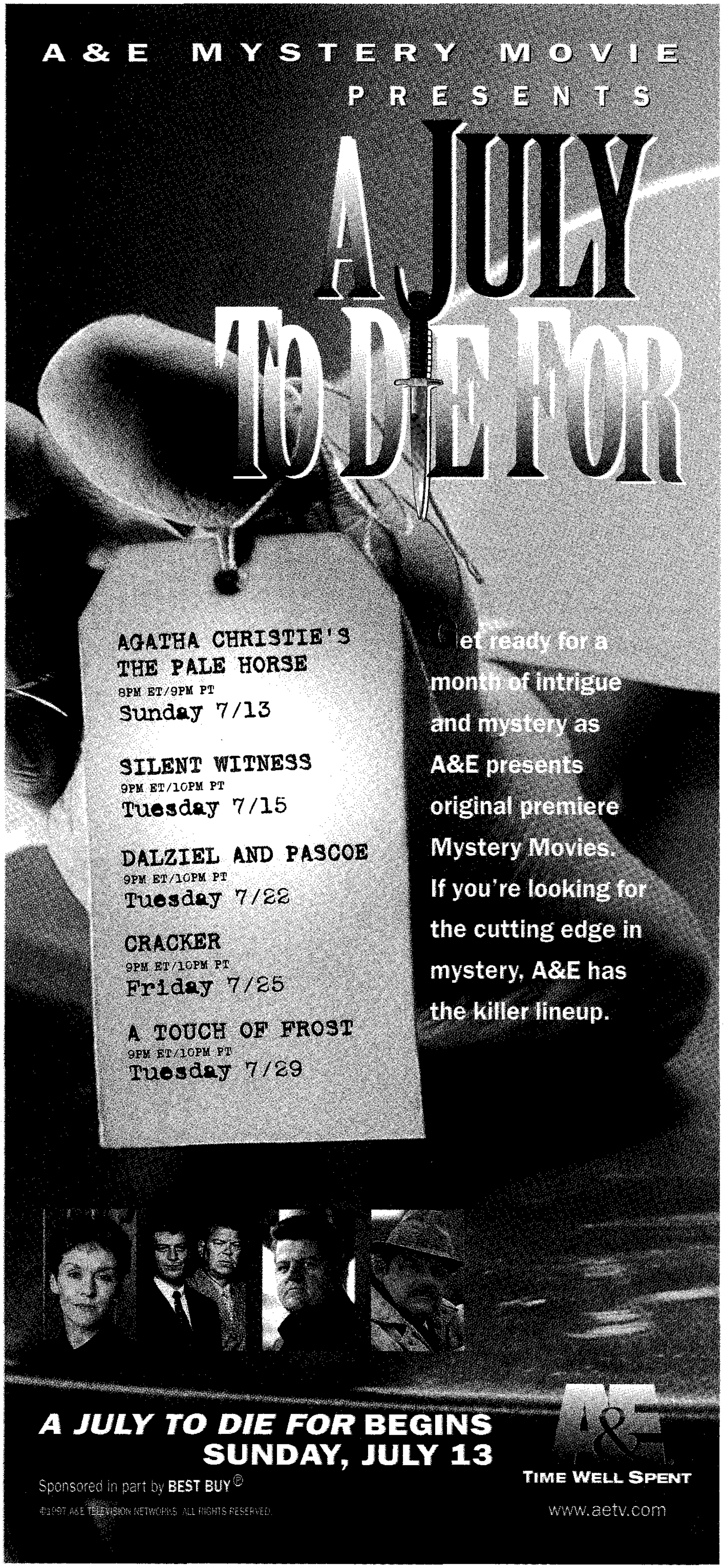
What Love is doing is a bit like arguing that we can find out whether American students know enough calculus by testing the freshman class at M.I.T. Well, actually, it's not like that. It's like testing the freshman class at M.I.T. and then touring the country pretending that your results—that no one needs to take more math—speak for all students. Little wonder that even Meir Stampfer, whose statistics Love adduced, couldn't figure out what she was up to.

OBJECTIFICATION

Thinking about Calvin Tomkins's excellent piece on the still-life show at MOMA (The Art World, June 9th), it occurs to me that still-lifes can be seen as extending the democratic—and romantic—idea of the dignity of the common man to include the dignity of the common object. It is certainly no accident that the genre first came into its own with the glorification of bourgeois life in seventeenth-century Dutch art. The still-life has the power to endow ordinary objects with mystery, as Joseph Cornell's boxes do, or to convey their inner resonance, as Cézanne's paintings do. One reason the MOMA exhibit suggests "how much has been lost to art in the last hundred years," as Tomkins notes, is that the contemporary still-life does little more than place common objects in novel surroundings in an attempt to give aesthetic weight to the utterly mundane. Although a modern still-life may give a presence to things generally taken for granted, it gives us only what we already know. That is not enough.

LOUIS LEVI
Garrison, N.Y.

Letters should be as brief as possible, and sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to "The Mail," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. They may be edited for length and clarity.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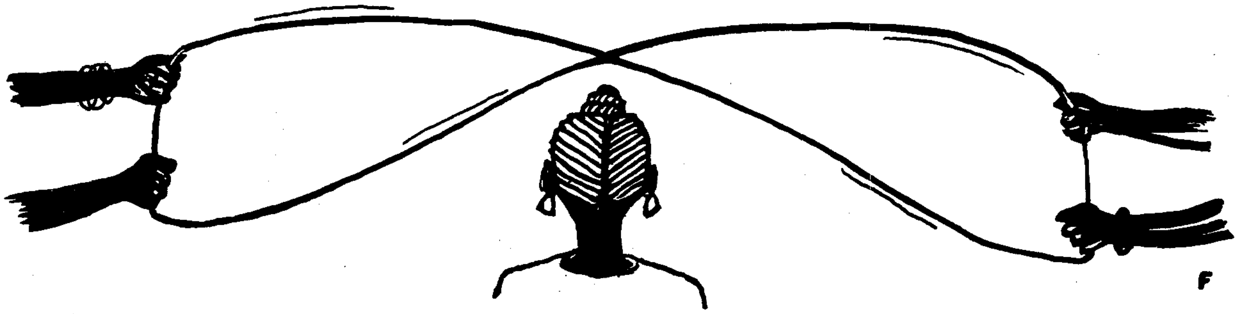

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OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Ice Factory 97—The SoHo Think Tank's summer series opens with Montana Lattin's "There's No Place Like Home," a multimedia retelling of "The Wizard of Oz." July 10-12 at 7. The festival continues through Aug. 24. (Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. 966-4844.)

Interviewing the Audience—Spalding Gray does Q.&A., as part of the Celebrate Brooklyn! festival. July 11 at 7:30. (Prospect Park Bandshell, Brooklyn. No tickets necessary.)

Lincoln Center Festival 97—"Les Danaïdes," an outdoor production of a reconstruction, by the Romanian director Silviu Purcarete, of Aeschylus' "The Suppliant Maidens." Opens July 8 at 9 and continues through July 20. (Damrosch Park.) . . . ¶ "Woza Afrika: After Apartheid," a series of plays by South African playwrights. July 8 at 8:30, July 9-11 at 8, July 12 at 2 and 8, and July 13 at 3: "The Suit," by Mothobi Mutloatse. . . . July 15 at 8: "Bergville Stories," by Duma Ndlovu; through July 20. The series continues through July 27. (John Jay Theatre, 10th Ave. at 58th St.) . . . ¶ "Incident at Cobbler's Knob," the latest comedy from David Sedaris, starring his sister Amy Sedaris. July 8 at 8:30 and July 9-11 at 8. (LaGuardia Concert Hall, 65th St. at Amsterdam Ave.) (For more information, call 875-5030.)

Mass Appeal—From the Irish Repertory Theatre, a revival of Bill C. Davis's 1980 play about two priests (Tony Coleman and Paul McGrane) with a problem. Opens July 9 at 7. (132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737.)

No Strings Attached—Todo con Nada presents a retrospective of the works of Richard Foreman. Opens July 7 at 8 and continues through Aug. 3. (NADA, 167 Ludlow St., south of Houston. For tickets and schedule information, call 479-7989.)

Those Left Behind—A psychological mystery by Ben Bettenbender, starring Rob Sedgwick and Janis Dardaris. In previews through July 14. Opens July 15 at 8. (Theatre 3, at 311 W. 43rd St. 246-5877.)

Two Divas & the Dog—A black nationalist, a black feminist, and a woman convinced she's the daughter of God make up the cast of characters in a comedy written by Kira Arné and directed by L. Kenneth Richardson. Opens July 9 at 8 and continues through July 20. (Theatre Row Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 290-8150.)

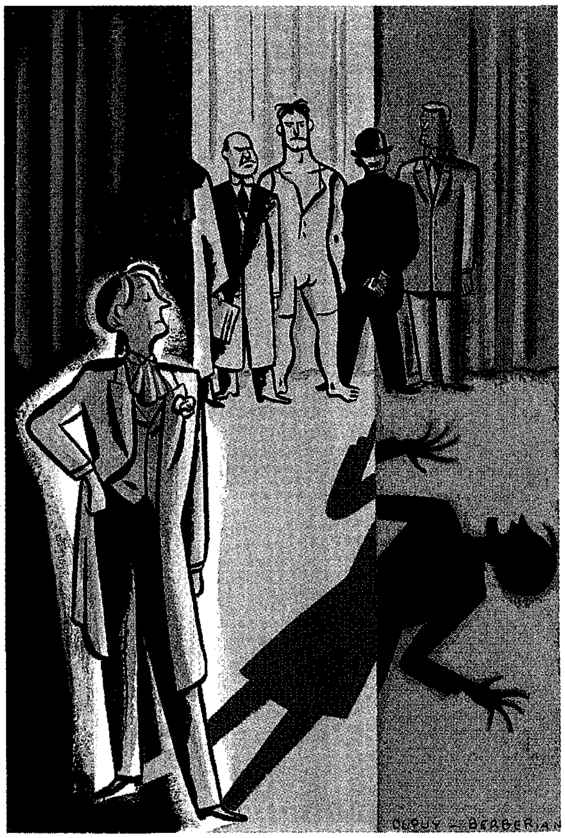
OPENED RECENTLY

Always . . . Patsy Cline—A two-person musical about the country-and-Western singer. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

Annie—Can the powerhouse waif find another bonanza in this twentieth-anniversary revival of her Broadway musical? With eight-year-old Brittny Kissinger wearing the red fright wig, anything is possible: no one ever went broke underestimating the intelligence of the New York public. Directed by Martin Charnin. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Barrymore—Christopher Plummer's rich, unmiked voice hits every note of sarcasm and self-loathing in William Luce's rambunctious script as he perfectly captures the grief behind the old ham's gallant frivolity. Well directed by Gene Saks. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Bermuda Avenue Triangle—In this silly farce, a sexy gambler on the skids (Joseph Bologna) returns the zing to the lives of two elderly women, a Jew (Renée Taylor) and a Catholic (Nanette Fabray), whose sullen daughters have put them out to pasture in a Las Vegas retirement home. Bologna and Taylor's script traffics in the kind of cookie-cutter stereotypes that rate high on the matinée-crowd yuk-o-meter. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)



Michael Emerson, in "Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde."

DUPUY-BERBERIAN

Bicker—A play by Mary McBride, about the Society for the Preservation of Vice, a group of nine women and one man dedicated to opera and antimoral behavior. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 533-4650. Closes July 13.)

Candide—Spectacle substitutes for satire in this revival and revision of the 1956 Leonard Bernstein–Lillian Hellman–Richard Wilbur musical, directed by Hal Prince. Ultimately, the production drowns out all personality, with the exceptions of the expert Andrea Martin, who knows a laugh and how to get it, and Arte Johnson, a little comic who is large on charm. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/19/97.) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Collected Stories—Donald Margulies takes on the subject of literary betrayal in his new play, which stars Maria Tucci as a distinguished short-story writer and Debra Messing as a graduate student who absorbs her professor's lessons all too well. The pair are well directed by Lisa Peterson, and Tucci, whose character is a cross between Professor Kingsfield and Margo Channing, is especially good at expressing the various degrees of heartache that inevitably come to all mentors. (6/2/97) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

A Doll's House—A thrilling version of Ibsen's play, imported from the West End. Anthony Page's scrupulous, sensitive direction catches all the music and irony in the collusion between Nora (in a masterly turn by Janet McTeer) and her husband, Torvald (the passionate Owen Teale). (4/14/97) (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Closes July 26.)

Forever Tango—This stepchild of Vegas and Buenos Aires gets everything right, from the basic ingredients (sex, pomade) to the big emotions (e.g., the weltschmerz of the bandonion players). One after another, the acrobatic couples flaunt their scissor steps with lubricious joy. But the real treat is the character dancing: it's a big surprise to encounter so many styles—suave, measured, sleazy, torrid, muscular, slapstick—and such a variety of song-length minidramas. Created and directed by Luis Bravo. (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

The 49 Years—The Actors Studio Free Theatre presents Elizabeth Swados's new play with music, directed by Estelle Parsons, who also stars as a composer looking back on her past. (529 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes July 13.)

The Gin Game—Julie Harris and Charles Durning shine in the National Actors Theatre's funny, poignant revival of D. L. Coburn's 1977 play, about two elderly people who discover an antidote to their loneliness in a card game. Charles Nelson Reilly directed. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

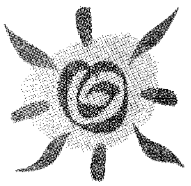
Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde—Writer-director Moisés Kaufman treads the well-worn ground of Wilde's martyrdom to Victorian intolerance in an intriguing and ultimately moving new way: he renders the playwright's trials from edited transcripts, interposing letters from some of the principals, passages from Wilde's published writings, and assorted bits and pieces of other people's memoirs and commentaries. The result, thanks to Kaufman's clever (if occasion-advertisement

TASTE OF NEW YORK

The VISA® Preferred Guide to Dining

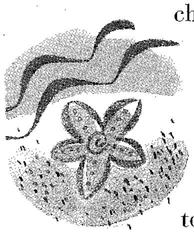
By Susan Breslow Sardone

What's your idea of the perfect summer evening in New York: window-shopping in SoHo, catching a Mostly Mozart concert in Lincoln Center, seeing one of Broadway's Tony-winning shows, or simply unwinding with friends in one of Gotham's great restaurants? Whether gourmet dining is your raison d'être or just part of the night's activities, the following restaurants are each delightful destinations. Plus, thanks to Visa and this restaurant program exclusive to *The New Yorker*, every time you charge a meal using your Visa® card at the participating restaurants in this and other "Taste of New York" features, you'll also contribute to Citymeals-on-Wheels, a nonprofit organization that delivers hot meals to the homebound elderly.*

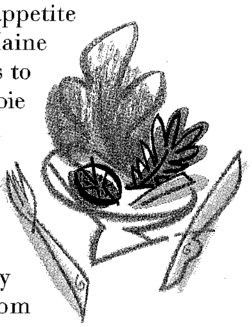


JUdson Grill • 152 West 52nd Street • 212-582-5252 Beyond the buzz of the lively bar and past the high-ceilinged dining room, chef John Villa gives his spin to New York cuisine: Familiar ingredients are accented with tastes of the Mediterranean, Pacific Rim, and North Africa. Choose from appetizers as showy as nearby Broadway—black olive gnocchi or chipotle smoked sturgeon and caviar in a crisp potato basket. The grilled swordfish entrée comes wrapped in lettuce leaves, keeping it tender and moist. Desserts—like pineapple carpaccio and cherry financier cake—are thorougly original. And just to remind you that you're in the heart of Fun City, a whimsical surprise arrives from the chef—fresh cotton candy.

Remi • 145 West 53rd Street • 212-581-4242 Celebrating its tenth anniversary, stylish Remi continues to seduce diners with the taste and magic of Venice. The Adam Tihany-designed space, illuminated by modern Venetian glass chandeliers, features a glorious 120-foot mural. Dig into delectable rosemary grissini (breadsticks) while considering chef Francesco Antonucci's contemporary Italian menu that includes creamy risottos, innovative seafood, and pasta al dente. A favorite cross-cultural dish is ravioli Marco Polo, stuffed with tuna, topped with ginger, and surrounded by a light tomato sauce. Fine Italian wines and gutsy grappa encourage spirited dining. The chocolate tart, zabaglione, housemade sorbetti, and assortment of almond brittle, truffles, and biscotti all make for sweet memories.



Restaurant Daniel • 20 East 76th Street • 212-288-0033 In his elegant Upper East Side temple of haute cuisine, chef-owner Daniel Boulud serves lavish dishes whose tastes are enhanced by classic French cooking techniques. Sublime signature items to sate a summer appetite include a chilled tomato consommé with Maine Peeky Toe crab, summer vegetables, and herbs to start. Follow with roasted quail stuffed with foie gras, purple mission figs, and prosciutto on a bed of spinach and young turnips. The dessert menu features both fruit and chocolate offerings. In a prestigious competition, sommelier Jean-Luc Le Du was named best in the Northeast; he recaptures the title nightly by recommending lesser-known vintages from Restaurant Daniel's equally winning wine list.



Zoë • 90 Prince Street • 212-966-6722 Located in SoHo's Cast Iron District, easygoing Zoë opens its folding glass doors to the summer breeze. Working in his open kitchen, chef Kevin Reilly conjures up an elaborate menu of American fare from the rotisserie, the grill, and the wood-burning oven. To stay cool, select from among fifteen iced and flavored vodkas chilling in the bar's freezer; then try the house-smoked salmon with goat cheese crepe, lime crème fraîche, and three-pea salad to start. Vegetarians can savor the stir-fry and basil-potato Napoleon with roasted rosemary tomatoes and carrot-ginger vinaigrette. To celebrate the weekend, come for brunch and choose lemon-scented buttermilk pancakes with macadamia nuts and strawberries.

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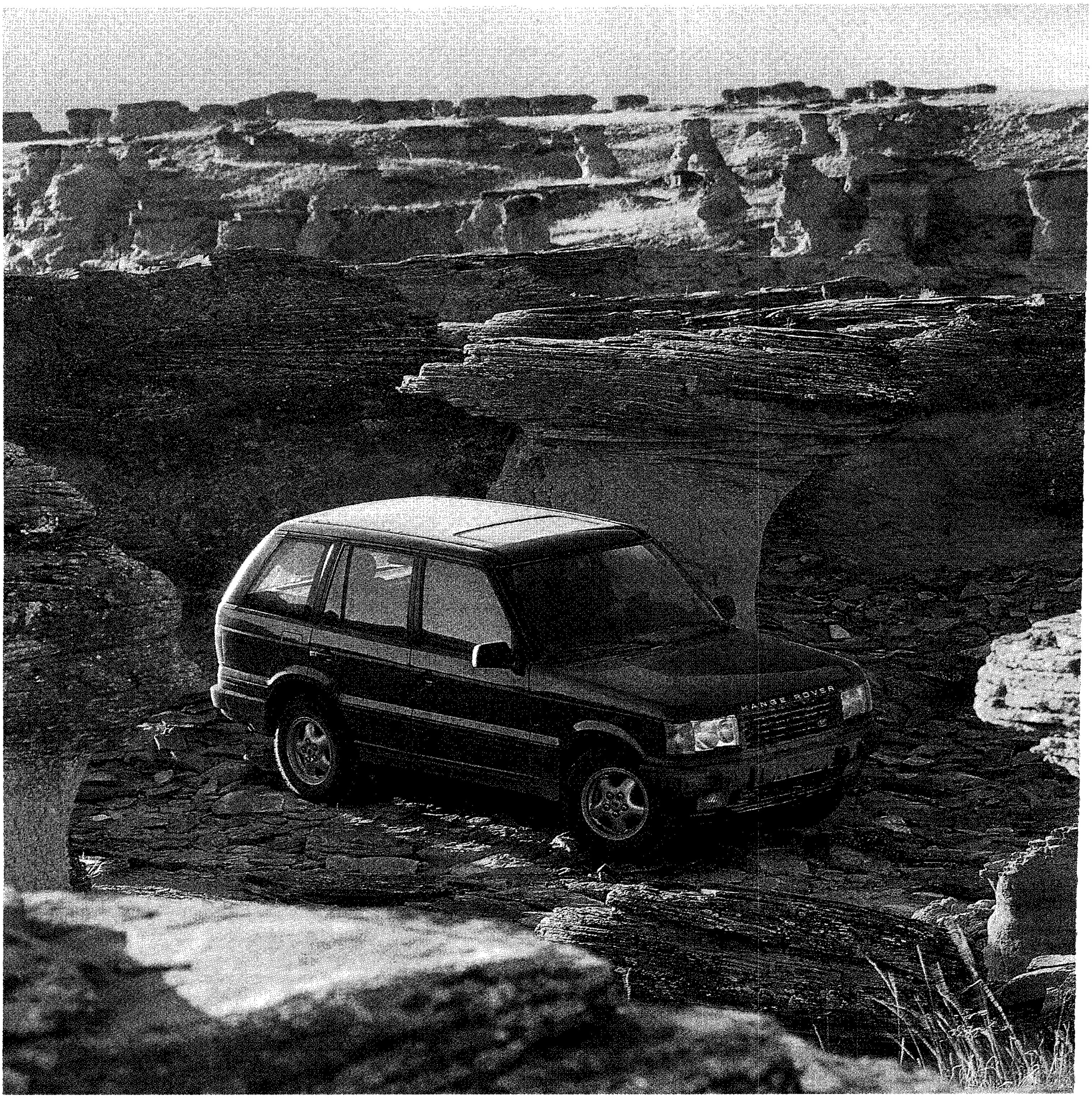

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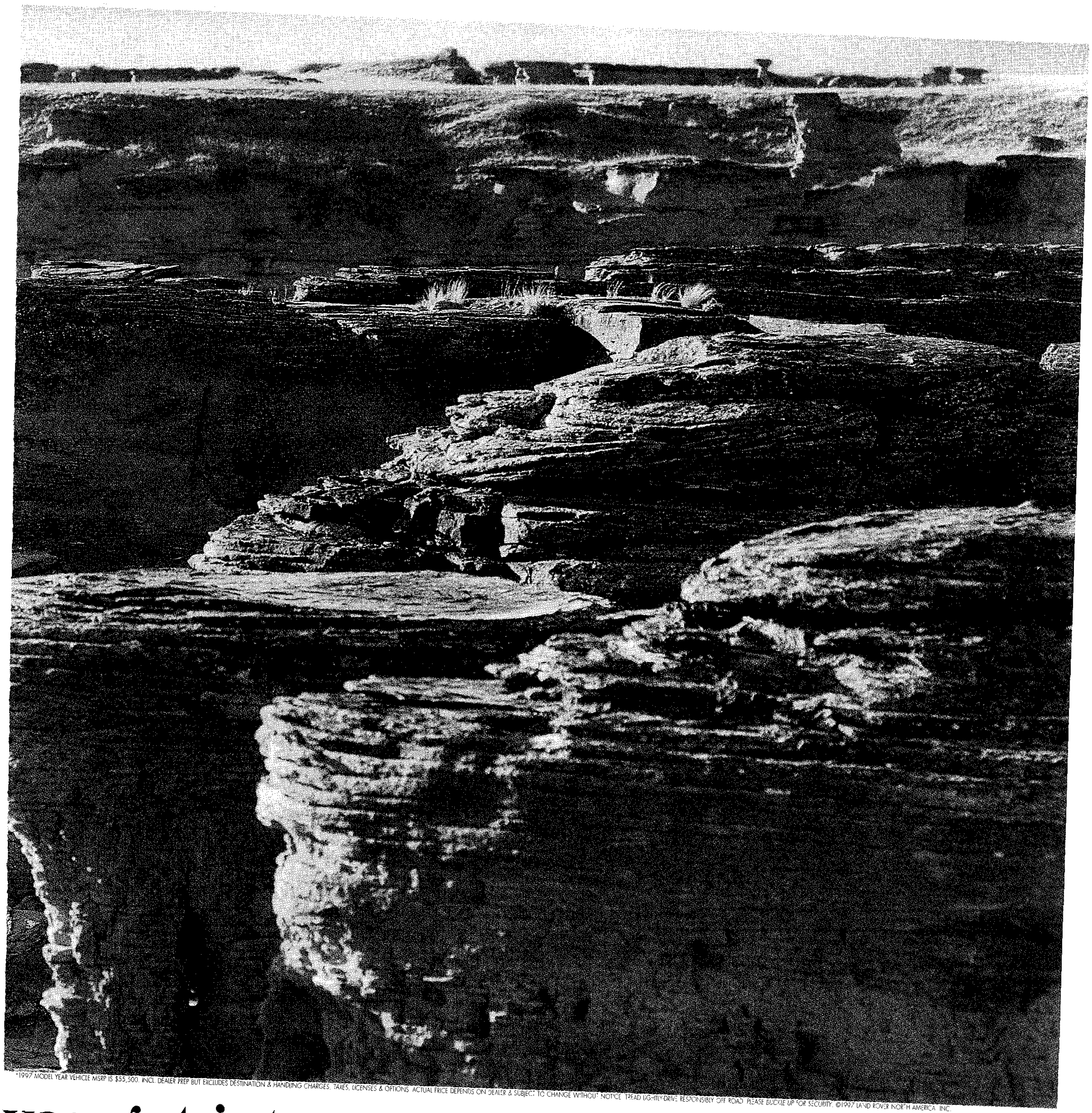

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ally self-indulgent) direction and a strong, versatile cast, is surprisingly theatrical. This story is so resonant as a modern morality play that sometimes it can seem as though there's nothing personal left in it; with the aid of Michael Emerson's paradoxically powerful portrayal of Wilde's increasing fragility, this production makes it once again the story of one man's tragedy. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

How I Learned to Drive—Paula Vogel's memory play, about a young woman (Mary-Louise Parker) who comes of age too quickly under the tutelage of her pedophile uncle (David Morse), is a clear-eyed marvel. (Century Theatre, 111 E. 15th St. 239-5200.)

Jekyll & Hyde—Enjoyable bombast, loosely based on the Robert Louis Stevenson novel. With music by Frank Wildhorn, lyrics and a book by Leslie Bricusse, and solid direction by Robin Phillips. (5/12/97) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Jest a Second!—James Sherman's new sequel to his 1991 Jewish-family comedy, "Beau Jest," in a Jewish Repertory Theatre production. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Closes July 20.)

The Last Night of Ballyhoo—In this romantic comedy of manners, set in Atlanta in 1939, Alfred Uhry stays true to a Southern sense of propriety: he takes on an unsavory topic (anti-Semitism among the Jewish upper crust) without dwelling on it long enough to offend anyone, and, like a practiced host, he shows you a good time without taxing you. Ron Lagomarsino directed. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100.)

The Life—This new musical, about the oldest profession in Times Square (before it became known as the new Times Square) and the men who profit from its practitioners, is a cynical, poisonous concoction, featuring phony funk, fake blues, overcooked pop, and a cartoonish, insulting book. The cast includes some good singers, notably Lillias White and Pamela Isaacs. (5/12/97) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

Men on the Verge of a His-Panic Breakdown—Felix A. Pire, who has such fine stage presence that he makes even the costume and set changes interesting, brings a wacky improvisational spirit to his portrayal of six gay Latino immigrants, in a one-man show penned by Guillermo Reyes. Joseph Megel directed. (47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 265-1086. Closes July 13.)

Mere Mortals and Others—Six short plays by David Ives, who created the wonderful "All in the Timing." Only two are new, but they are Ives at his clever best. "Time Flies" is about the short life of two mayflies—only one day to grow up and get it on before going to the great beyond—and the two actors who play them, Anne O'Sullivan and Arnie Burton, are perfectly buggy. "Dr. Fritz; or, The Forces of Light" is a piece of insanity set somewhere south of the border, and Nancy Opel, woman of a hundred lunatic accents, gives an inspired performance as a *loca* local and as a mad German doctor. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052.)

My Night with Reg—The New Group wraps up its season with British playwright Kevin Elyot's 1995 comedy about a group of six gay friends. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Queens Blvd.—A roommate comedy by Paul Corrigan. (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 239-6200.)

The Seagull—An indoor-outdoor staging of Chekhov's play, by the Pulse Ensemble Theatre. (432 W. 42nd St. 695-1596. Closes July 12.)

Sexy Dirty Bloody Scary—There you have it. A production of San Francisco's Splanchnic Theatricals, written by and starring Chris Brophy. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202. Closes July 13.)

Something Blue—A wedding comedy, written and performed by Michaela Murphy. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103. Closes July 13.)

Student Body Assembly—The performance artist Holly Hughes is joined by graduates of her Performance Artists Correspondence School and by members of Future Homosexuals of America. Mondays only, through July 28. (Dixon Place, 258 Bowery, near Houston St. 219-3088.)

Tap Dogs—Australia's work-booted tap troupe. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

Tartuffe—Molière's comedy, directed by Terrence O'Brien, is the first of two outdoor productions by the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival. (Boscobel Restoration, Garrison, N.Y. For ticket information and directions, call 914-265-9575. Closes July 20.)

Tell-Tale—Theatre Couture puts a drag spin on Edgar Allan Poe, in a comic thriller starring Sherry Vine and Jackie Beat and featuring puppetry by Basil Twist. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

Titanic—Though this musical about history's most tragic maiden voyage contains no small number of historical and theatrical misjudgments, it nevertheless manages to take you very close to the heart of the matter—the enormity of the disaster and its heartbreaking human details—and it qualifies as a genuine addition to American musical theatre. Richard Jones directed. (5/12/97) (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

LONG RUNS

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **BRING IN DA NOISE, BRING IN DA FUNK:** Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CHICAGO:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY STRIKES BACK!:** Stardust, Broadway at 51st St. 239-6200. . . . **FULL GALLOP:** Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200. . . . **A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **GRANDMA SYLVIA'S FUNERAL:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555. . . . **HOWARD CRABTREE'S WHEN PIGS FLY:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. . . . **I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE:** Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200. . . . **JOSEPH GABRIEL: MAGIC ON BROADWAY:** Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE KING AND I:** Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100. . . . **LATE NITE CATECHISM:** St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **RENT:** Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. . . . **SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 239-6200. . . . **VICTOR/VICTORIA:** Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.

Wendy Perron's "Downtown Underground."

DANCE

"Downtown Underground"—Starting with your typical step-lively subway encounters, choreographer Wendy Perron has created a full-length work for eighteen dancers and six subway musicians. (LaGuardia Concert Hall, 65th St. at Amsterdam Ave. 721-6500. July 13, July 15, and July 17 at 8.)

Central Park SummerStage—Murray Louis and Nikolais Dance offer repertory fare ("Creation of the World," "Tensile Involvement," and "Four Brubeck Pieces"); and Sara Pearson and Patrik Widrig & Dancers bring excerpts from "Ordinary Festivals," a work for sixteen dancers and two hundred oranges, and première "Splash" and "Mindful Navigations." (Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 11 at 8:30. No tickets necessary.)

Pilobolus—The athletic Vermont troupe opens its monthlong season of new works and such repertory offerings as "Pyramid of the Moon" and "Walklyndon." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. July 8-11 and July 14-15 at 8, and July 12 at 2 and 8. Through July 20.)

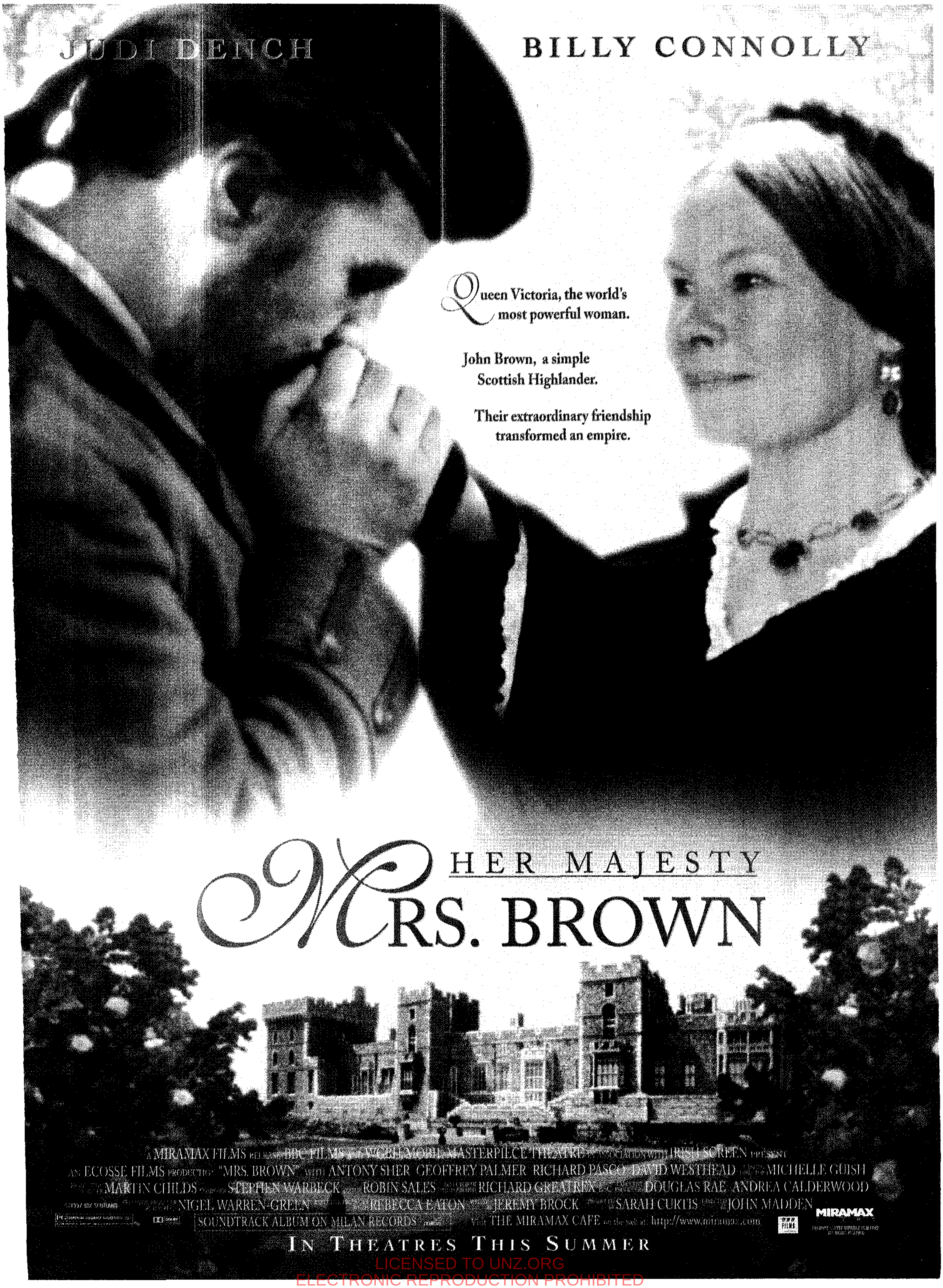
Dances for Wave Hill—The Bronx garden begins its series of golden-hour dance concerts with a split bill: American choreographers Bebe Miller and Susan Braham collaborate with Australian colleagues in "Span," to a score by accordionist Guy Klucevsek; and Margarita Guergué presents "La Rosa sin Porqué," her improvised response to the setting. (W. 249th St. at Independence Ave., the Bronx. For information, call 718-549-3200. July 9 at 6:30 and July 13 at 5.)

Noche Flamenca—Martin Santangelo and Soledad Barrios, a husband-and-wife team, are the anchors of this eight-member troupe of dancers, singers, and guitarists, and they bring to the passionate vocabulary of flamenco (the proud carriage, flashing hands, declarative boot work, intensely focussed gazes) unexpectedly tender nuances. This is their fourth summer at the intimate Theatre 80. (80 St. Marks Place. 279-4200. July 9-12 and July 15 at 8, and July 13 at 3. Through Aug. 17.)

Asian Contemporary Dance Festival—A lineup of companies from both sides of the Pacific, all of which blend traditional Asian and modern-dance idioms. July 8-9 at 8: Son Mu Ga Zen Dance Company. . . . ¶ July 10 at 8: Dance Art Hong Kong. . . . ¶ July 11-12 at 8: Xin Peng Wang. . . . ¶ July 13 at 3 and 8: Fu-Lann Tao and the Tao's Dance Theatre, Kui-In Chung Dance Company, and Yuan Shang. (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448.)

OUT OF TOWN

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival—July 8-10 at 8, July 11 at 8:30, and July 12 at 2 and 8:30: Limón Dance Company. . . . ¶ July 10-11 at 8:15, July 12 at 5, and July 13 at 7: Pilar Rioja. (Becket, Mass. For information about tickets, call 413-243-0745.)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NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

Lyle Lovett—The wry, dapper Texan with the ten-gallon haircut has spent the past few years in tabloid hell. Now he's returned to his original incarnation, a wonderfully strange singer-songwriter. His live shows are fun; they're also surprisingly emotional. (Westbury Music Fair. 516-334-0800. July 9 at 8.)

Boston—Twenty-one years ago, guitarist Tom Scholz, singer Brad Delp, et al. helped define American arena rock by grafting the loins-stirring riffs of Led Zeppelin to the shiny-happy vocal harmonies of Alvin and the Chipmunks. If we're lucky, Delp's pop howl may stir up more than a feeling. (Jones Beach Theatre. 516-221-1000. July 9 at 8.)

Ornette Coleman's "? Civilization"—No musician deserves the royal treatment more than Coleman does, and with this event it looks like he's finally getting it. But don't expect any of Lincoln Center's institutional dust to settle on the professional iconoclast: he's always been eager to stir up trouble (before a prestige crowd in San Francisco a few years back, he presented a body-piercing troupe as pre-intermission fare), and a hint of dangerous unpredictability hangs over each of these three programs. On the 9th, Kurt Masur conducts the New York Philharmonic and Coleman leads his electrified band, Prime Time, in a rare performance of his 1972 symphony, "Skies of America" (see Classical Music). The 10th finds Coleman in a dream reunion with his old bandmates bassist Charlie Haden and drummer Billy Higgins; the welcome addition of trumpeter Wallace Roney and pianist Kenny Barron raises the stakes that much higher. "Tone Dialing," as the show on the 11th is named, is sure to cause a ruckus, as Prime Time, a rapper, dancers, video artists, and others animate Coleman's vision of America circa 1997. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. July 9-11 at 8.)

The Impressions—Featuring original members Sam Gooden and Fred Cash, and performing such hits as "People Get Ready" and "For Your Precious Love." (MetroTech Commons, Flatbush Ave. at Myrtle Ave., Brooklyn. July 10 at noon. No tickets necessary.)

Spyro Gyra—The lightweight pop-jazz machine is still at it. (Castle Clinton, Battery Park. July 10 at 6:30. Free tickets, which are required, will be distributed at 5.)

"Lollapalooza '97"—The lack of a bankable marquee band may be the main reason this year's movable feast has been doing less than stellar business. That said, big names don't always mean good music. Orbital's heat-seeking techno (its theme for "The Saint" was the best part of the movie) should put bodies in motion; with the demise of Soundgarden and the continuing absence of Pearl Jam, Tool is clearly at the top of the grunge heap; Snoop Doggy Dogg adds real rap credibility; Tricky has emerged as one of the most creative forces in the music business; Porno for Pyros is hit or miss live; and the Eels are among the most promising new bands of the past year. And don't forget the body-piercing kiosks. (Downing Stadium, Randall's Island. For information, call 249-8870. July 11 at 2; gates open at noon.)

Maxwell—The fact that this mild-mannered, twenty-four-year-old sex machine from Brooklyn can actually fill Radio City Music Hall for two nights is a good sign for pop music. Not for Maxwell the crotch-grabbing, dirty-mouthed posing of the hip-hop world: his oleaginous funk is more in keeping with the Stylistics' sound during producer Thom Bell's reign. The ultimate musical date night. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. July 11-12 at 8.)

Guided by Voices / Sleater-Kinney—In the past year or so, this Dayton-based combo (whose ringleader, Robert Pollard, picked up his flair for finger painting with words as a fourth-grade teacher) has gone from cult-confection status to near-stardom. / The critically acclaimed all-female, post-punk trio out of Olympia, Washington. Cobra Verde (which plays on Guided by Voices' latest album) warms up the crowd (see also Brownies). (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary. July 12 at 3.)

"70's Music Explosion"—Starring the Village People, KC & the Sunshine Band, Kool & the Gang (featuring JT Taylor), Vicki Sue Robinson, Thelma Houston, the Trammps, and Deney Terrio and Motion. (Jones Beach Theatre. July 12 at 7.)

ZZ Top—It's been fourteen years since this funky Texas trio's glory days, when those wacky beards were the most memorable thing on MTV. Funny thing is, these guys still make great, relevant records. Their live shows are as long and woolly as those beards. (Jones Beach Theatre. July 13 at 8.)

Ornette Coleman presents "? Civilization," at Avery Fisher Hall.

ANTHONY BARBOZA

New Edition—From boys to men to Vegas. Once upon a time, for a mature Bobby Brown to share the stage with his former colleagues Bell, Biv, and Devoe would have been a major, panty-throwing event; the music business is cruel and unforgiving. Still, this is a great night for ear candy, even if it's a little stale. (Radio City Music Hall. July 14 at 8.)

"Carnegie Hall Celebrates the Glorious M-G-M Musicals"—Songs from and tales about such landmarks as "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers," "Gigi," and "High Society," in a show whose stars include Leslie Caron, Donald O'Connor, Celeste Holm, Comden and Green, Skitch Henderson, Van Johnson, Ann Miller, and Mickey Rooney. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. July 15-16 at 7:30.)

Santana / Rusted Root—The roots of modern rock meet the roots-rock throwbacks. (Radio City Music Hall. July 15-16 at 8.)

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is always advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Young baritone crooner **tom postilio** is at work in the woody nook known as the Oak Room through July 19. Dining.

Birdland, 315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—The legendary club has a new address and bigger digs. July 11-12: **al grey** uses his trombone to channel the spirits of swing. His sextet here includes Norman Simmons, one of the great piano accompanists. Mondays are reserved for the **toshiko akiyoshi jazz orchestra,** which features the bandleader's husband, flutist and saxophonist **lew tabackin.** Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through July 13: **betty carter** and her trio. For this jazz diva, tempo is king. Nobody can shape a rhythm quite like she can; time contracts and expands like a Slinky, while phrases fall unexpectedly, with an utterly personal logic. Half the pleasure of a Carter show, of course, is checking out her band: alumni include the pianists John Hicks, Cyrus Chestnut, and Stephen Scott. Starting July 15: Acoustic guitarist **earl klugh.** Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle is dark for the summer, but across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **barbara carroll** presides at the piano through Aug. 2.

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through July 13: The **jackie mc lean** quintet. In the fifties, alto saxophonist McLean was a sideman for Miles Davis; by the sixties, iconoclastic players like Ornette Coleman were working with him. Having kept himself in the fray for decades, he is now a compendium of modern jazz: he makes the distinctions between bop, hard bop, and modal playing disappear. From July 15: **randy weston's african rhythms.** Mondays belong to national treasure **les paul.** Dining.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—The great cabaret in the sky. Through July 19, pianist and vocalist **steve ross** presents "I Won't Dance," a show of songs popularized by Fred Astaire. Among the accompanying performers are pianist Bruno Casolari and vocalist Karen Murphy. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Rainbow Room, there's a revolving dance floor, plus swinging big-band music courtesy of the Rainbow Room Orchestra, featuring vocalists Sean Mahony and Claudette Sierra. Closed Mondays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A convivial and crowded jazz club where the musicians are always top-shelf. July 8-10: Pianist **harry whitaker** is obviously from the share-the-wealth school. Any other instrumentalist who's about to break big might want the spotlight's full glare at his first major club engagement, but not Whitaker; he's bringing along a guitarist, a vocalist, and even another featured soloist in Myron Walden, a young hot-shot saxophonist who only last year was in the position Whitaker finds himself in today. July 11-13: The Onaje A. Gumbs group. Dining.

Village Gate, 240 W. 52nd St. (307-5252)—Although the headlong Gallic swing of the Hot Club of France recordings, which featured the joined-at-the-hip partnership of the brilliant Belgian guitarist Django Reinhardt and the French violinist Stéphane Grappelli, was all but inimitable, that hasn't stopped American guitarist **FRANK VIGNOLA'S HOT CLUB USA** (July 10-12) from paying heartfelt homage. The existential impulsiveness that marked the original items has given way to good old American sprightliness, but buoyancy has its own rewards. Wednesdays are reserved for the Roy Gerson swing band, with vocalist Heywood Gregory. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The world's most famous jazz club is also the last place in town that still looks and feels like a classic jazz club: subterranean and thick with the spirits of past masters. The **BILL FRISELL** trio is in through July 13. Frisell plays guitar like Miles Davis played trumpet: in the hands of such radical thinkers, their instruments simply become different animals. And, like Davis, Frisell loves to have a lot of legroom when he improvises—the space that terrifies others quickens his blood. Starting July 15: The **FRED HERSCH** trio. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** still holds sway on Mondays.

Visiones, 125 Macdougal St., at W. 3rd St. (673-5576)—A tiny, low-key supper club where the jazz, like the Spanish-American cuisine, can take on a spicy, multicultural flavor. The **MARIA SCHNEIDER ORCHESTRA** is now in its fourth year of Monday nights here; the composer and arranger's big band has settled nicely into institutional status.

Zinc Bar, 90 W. Houston St. (477-8337)—A young guitarist with flying fingers and a heart filled with bebop, **RON AFFIF** has the benefit of a regular Monday gig at an intimate space that caters to guitar freaks. For a six-string whiz with almost too much to say, it doesn't get any better than that. Saturdays feature Brazilian jazz.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. Saxophonist Bob Kindred, pianist Bill Cunliffe, and bassist Dean Johnson are in July 9; Lee Musiker takes over from Cunliffe July 10-12.

ROCK, ETC.

Arlene Grocery, 95 Stanton St., between Ludlow and Orchard Sts. (358-1633)—July 9: Singer-songwriter dynamo **WILLIE NILE.** The **FLYING NEUTRINOS** are in on July 13. This itinerant New Orleans jazz band—its members grew up in the Big Easy, took a brief detour through Europe, and wound up adrift on the East River in a homemade paddleboat—is a family affair. Twentysomething cousins Ingrid Lucia and Todd Londagin lead the group: Lucia's sassy patter and mischievous grin are a lot like Billie Holiday's, and wonder boy Londagin plays trombone, tap-dances, and has a disarming Chet Baker-like voice.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—July 9: **MAGIC DICK AND JAY GEILS' BLUESTIME.** July 12: **STEVE FORBERT AND THE NEXT BIG THINGS.** The folk-rock troubadour from Meridian, Mississippi, appeared on the New York scene in the late seventies and released four albums in quick succession. After six years without a new record, he resurfaced in 1988 with "Streets of This Town," a strong collection of tuneful, hopeful (but not mindlessly hopeful) songs. His next album, in 1992, was "The American in Me," a thin, disappointing toss-off with none of the spirit or sad truthfulness of his best work. Still, Forbert can always be counted on to offer a solid live show, and when he sings one of his full-bodied songs about love and longing and loss, his fans will have the pleasure of thinking, Yes—exactly.

Brownies, 169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (420-8392)—Vancouver's noise-loving **SUPERCONDUCTOR** shares July 12 with Cleveland's hard-rocking **COBRA VERDE** (see also Guided by Voices in Concerts).

Chez Es Saada, 42 E. 1st St. (777-5617)—The improbably grand tiled staircase brings you down to a basement transformed by scattered rose petals and golden light into the secret Tangier of Burroughs and Bowles. North African-flavored bistro fare is served throughout, d.j.s play everything from nineteen-fifties Egyptian 45s to up-to-the minute Moroccan *chaiba* dance music, and you can slouch on a hassock and sip a vintage cocktail. For all the glamour, though, the owners are determined to maintain a neighborhood atmosphere, easygoing and friendly.

Chicago B.L.U.E.S., 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (924-9755)—July 11: A rare club gig by guitarist **ELVIN BISHOP,** who became famous as a member of the Paul Butterfield Blues Band.

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—A comfortable neo-Moroccan bar hidden inside the Time Café. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is a fine spot to take in a show. July 11: Led by femme-fatale vocalist Jennifer Charles, a brooding beauty who looks like a cross between Juliette Lewis and Morticia Addams, the downtown combo **ELYSIAN FIELDS** plays what might best be described as erotic jazz. July 12: **FIVE CHINESE BROTHERS** formed more than a decade ago at Columbia University (as the Special Guests) and have since become local heroes and one of smart pop's great journeyman acts. Think Squeeze or Crowded House, only louder, looser, bluesier—more American. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

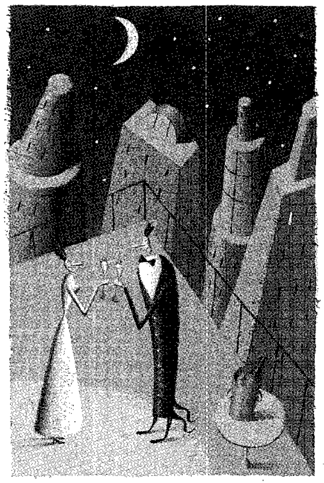
Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—July 9: St. Paul power trio **WALT MINK.** July 10: The countrified alternapop of **RETSIN.** July 12: Free-jazz and downtown-rock drummer **WILLIAM HOOKER,** who over the past two decades has collaborated with Elliott Sharp, Thurston Moore, and Lee Ranaldo. July 14: **LOTION,** the Manhattan rock quartet whose career trajectory is almost exclusively due to an alliance with Thomas Pynchon.

Mercury Lounge, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—July 9: Poet, fledgling novelist, and spoken-word artist **MAGGIE ESTEP.** July 11: Belgian pop with **DEUS.**

Rodeo Bar, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—The walls simulate a log cabin, a buffalo head blows smoke through its nostrils, and a horse trailer has been converted into a bar. It's just about the best free house in town. July 10: The **VIDALIAS,** an Atlanta quintet that plays sweet country-and-Western rock. July 13: The **FLYING NEUTRINOS** (see Arlene Grocery). July 14: An acoustic performance by much-in-demand downtown guitarist **GARY LUCAS.**

S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif, dedicated to calypso, reggae, and the bossa nova. July 11: R. & B. singer **HORACE BROWN.** The **MANGUAL FAMILY**—Josés Sr. and Jr. and friends—drum their congas, timbales, and bongos late into the night on July 14. Dining.

Supper Club, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—July 15: **BRAD,** featuring Seattle singer-keyboardist Shawn Smith and Pearl Jam guitarist Stone Gossard. With Chicago's **VERBOW,** which sees the great guitar-and-cello duo Jason & Alison opening up with a full-on band.



Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—July 9: Singer-songwriter **PATTI ROTHBERG.** The seminal rap act **ULTRAMAGNETIC MC'S** holds a rare, must-see reunion on July 11. This is the group that gave the world Kool Keith, a.k.a. Dr. Octagon, who, after years of dead ends, is now heading toward mainstream success. July 12: Reggae with the **WAILERS** and ska with the **SELECTER.** July 15: Campy hardcore with **GWAR,** and run-of-the-mill hardcore with Electric Hellfire Club and Puncture.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—July 9: An old-school legend, **BIZ MARKIE** is still the coolest rapper around, with the possible exception of Kool Keith (see Tramps). July 11: Under the leadership of the tradition-rattling Celtic-music gadfly Larry Kirwan, the raucously rocking **BLACK 47** has become an American version of the Pogues—only with a wider musical point of view and fewer barroom-brawl wounds.

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—"Ivan Albright: Magic Realist," a centennial retrospective that includes paintings, watercolors, drawings, and lithographs by the American artist (1897-1983), whose clinically precise draftsmanship lent an eerie vitality to his treatment of decay. Through Sept. 7. . . . ¶ The museum's collection of Chinese art, one of the finest outside Asia, now has room to glow: after two years of construction, a new series of galleries nearly doubles the exhibition space. These cool, quiet rooms create the ideal atmosphere in which to grasp the rarefied sensibility of imperial Chinese painting, calligraphy, and decorative art. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—"Objects of Desire: The Modern Still Life," an exhibition devoted to domestic arrangements, from Cézanne's apples to Warhol's Campbell's soup cans. Through Aug. 26. . . . ¶ Cindy Sherman's career began in the late seventies with her witty series of "Untitled Film Stills," sixty-nine black-and-white photographs in which she poses as the protagonist of a variety of noir films: the starlet standing in the door of her motel room, clutching a Martini; the sex kitten splayed on a bed, wearing a clingy silk slip; the smartly dressed career girl dwarfed by the skyscraper canyon of lower Manhattan. Sherman helped pioneer the exploration of the no man's land between high and low: the source of her imagery isn't Hollywood B movies per se but rather the highly intellectualized reinvention of the genre by such European filmmakers as Visconti and Antonioni. Her blond bombshell isn't Jayne Mansfield; she's Monica Vitti deconstructing Jayne Mansfield, and that's a big difference—the difference between camp and irony. Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ "Paris/The 1890s" examines the fin-de-siècle printmaking of Bonnard, Renoir, Toulouse-Lautrec, Vuillard, and others. Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ "Stenberg Brothers: Constructing a Revolution in Soviet Design," an excellent summer show of Constructivist film posters. Vladimir and Georgii Stenberg actually achieved in their energetic and vibrantly colored work the unity of formal innovation and mass appeal that the Russian avant-garde aspired to. Though they did posters for Eisenstein and Dziga Vertov, in many other cases it is the posters, not the films they advertised, that have lasted. Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ "More Than One: Twentieth Century Print Portfolios." Through Sept. 2. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 6; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—"From Dürer to Rauschenberg: A Quintessence of Drawing." A coöperative venture with Vienna's Albertina Graphics Collection presents masterpieces of draftsmanship, from finished portraits to sketchbook whimsies, by seventeen artists, including Raphael, Rembrandt, Fragonard, Kandinsky, and

MARTIN LADDE

Beuys. Through Aug. 24. . . . ¶ Large-scale sculpture by the Basque minimalist Cristina Iglesias, who favors forthright urban materials—concrete, iron, glass, etc.—and delicately etched surfaces. Through Sept. 7. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM SOHO, 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (423-3500)—"Reversible Destiny: Arakawa/Gins." A pair of long-term collaborative projects, "The Mechanism of Meaning" and "Reversible Destiny Architecture," from Rei Arakawa and Madeline Gins, offer a collection of scale models, photographs, and interactive panels that show what can happen when a painter and a poet take on the philosophy of architecture. Through Aug. 31. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—"Keith Haring." Everybody loves Haring, but he was, in fact, human—a circumstance that seems to have eluded the creators of this breathless beatification posing as a retrospective. There are a few paintings here and there, but most of the space is given over to something reminiscent of the way the Germans restore their great composers' homes: one is permitted to gaze upon (among many other items) the artist's Monkees Fan Club card, his sneakers, his collection of cassettes, his wallet, his cancelled passport. Does it really add to our understanding of Haring's work to see his bill from Mr. Chow? The show is a lavishly designed multimedia extravaganza—meaning there's a video blasting away in nearly every gallery. In one room, a big hole has been ripped out of the wall, and a specially made dance mix, by d.j. Junior Vasquez, plays loudly as a pile of little monitors shows an amateur videotape of the closing night of the Paradise Garage. You had to be there. Through Sept. 21. . . . ¶ "Frank Lloyd Wright: Designs for an American Landscape, 1922-32," a meticulously curated exhibition of drawings and exquisitely finished architectural models for five utopian resort projects that the Master envisioned for the American wilderness but that were never built. Through Aug. 31. . . . ¶ "Collection in Context: Rockwell Kent by Night." Through Sept. 14. . . . ¶ Twenty-five photographs by Larry Fink, of boxers and their camp followers. Through Sept. 7. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St. (769-5100)—"The Lost World: The Life and Death of Dinosaurs." Fossils, time lines, and a re-creation of a paleontological dig, displayed in the shadow of a seventy-foot-long reconstruction of a mamenchisaurus. Through Sept. 30. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM OF ART, Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—"Process on Paper: Recent Acquisitions." Prints (Lyonel Feininger, Louise Bourgeois, Vito Acconci), drawings (John Singer Sargent, Kiki Smith), and photographs (Roy De Carava, Lorna Simpson) demonstrate the technical range of works on paper. Through Sept. 28. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5, and Saturday evenings until 9.)

AMERICAN CRAFT MUSEUM, 40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535)—"The Art of Toshiko Takaezu" follows the development of the ceramist from her utilitarian works of the fifties to her continuing experiments in closed forms and colored glazes. Through Nov. 2. . . . ¶ "On the Cutting Edge: Contemporary Quilts from the Collection" presents eleven quilts that use painterly strategies—abstraction, narrative, and, in one case, actual paint. Through Nov. 2. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

ASIA SOCIETY, Park Ave. at 70th St. (517-2742)—The seventy-five photographs in "Picturing Hong Kong: Photography 1855-1910" open a window onto one of the most fascinating places on earth. Many of the portraits and scenes of everyday life were produced as tourist souvenirs; other images (for example, twelve decapitated pirates from Kowloon, their heads neatly set beside them on the beach) have the graphic immediacy of classic photojournalism. The exceptional quality and condition of the prints make the show required viewing for anyone interested in nineteenth-century photography. Through Aug. 17. . . . ¶ "Gods, Kings, and Tigers," a magnificent display of court paintings, drawings, and regalia, lent by the royal family of Kotah, a Hindu principality (until India achieved nationhood, fifty years ago) near Jaipur. The paintings radiate vigor—scenes of martial pageantry, of the god Krishna entertaining his myriad lovers, of princes hunting and hawking. Through July 27. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8; Sundays, noon to 5.)

COOPER-HEWITT NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 91st St. (860-6894)—"Henry Dreyfuss Directing Design: The Industrial Designer and His Work, 1929-72." Through Aug. 24. . . . ¶ "Do-It-Yourself Architecture for the Great Outdoors." Tents, actually, and they're on the terrace and in the garden. Through Oct. 19. . . . ¶ "The Jewelry of Tone Vigeland." Seventy-nine examples, in gold, silver, steel, and other metals, by the Norwegian metalsmith. Through Aug. 24. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

FRICK COLLECTION, 1 E. 70th St. (288-0700)—"The Proud Republic: Dutch Medals of the Golden Age." More than forty examples of seventeenth-century work, predominantly in high relief, with full-face and three-quarter-view portraits—of Cromwell, Joost van den Vondel, Maarten Tromp, and their ilk—and reverse scenes of sea battles and cityscapes and allegorical tableaux. Through July 27. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

ISAMU NOGUCHI GARDEN MUSEUM, 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Rd., Long Island City (718-204-7088)—Works from every period in the

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career of the Japanese-American sculptor (1904-88) are installed in a garden and in open-air galleries carved from, and added to, an old photo-engraving factory. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008)—"Private Histories: Four Centuries of Journal Keeping" presents the personal records of such diarists as Charlotte Brontë, Victor Hugo's daughter Adèle, Walt Whitman, and Sylvia Plath. Through Aug. 31. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5; Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St. (534-1672)—"New York Gets Married: Dressing for a Special Day, 1765-1997" brings gowns worn by Morgans and Rockefellers out of the mothballs, along with newer ones for, say, a bride who met her man in an Internet chat room and such other essentials as monogrammed wedding-cake boxes and leather-bound brunch menus. Through Sept. 21. . . . ¶ "A Dream Well Planned: The Empire State Building" chronicles the "world's greatest tower," from the destruction of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, which formerly occupied the site, through the vertiginous construction of the eighty-six-floor building with its two-hundred-foot mast (intended to function as a mooring for dirigibles), to the 1945 crash of a B-25 bomber into its seventy-ninth floor. . . . ¶ "Of Thee We Sing: George and Ira Gershwin Centennial." Gershwiniana (including evening scarves, money clips, sheet music, and opening-night programs) to commemorate a date about midway between the brothers' respective hundredth birthdays. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St., at Central Park W. (873-3400)—"Before Central Park: The Life and Death of Seneca Village," an exhibition devoted to the African-American and Irish community that was razed to make way for Central Park. Through Nov. 30. . . . ¶ "The Birds of America," a hundred and fifty watercolors by John James Audubon. Through Oct. 5. . . . ¶ "From New York to Salt Lake: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints." A century and a half after the founding of Salt Lake City, this exhibition traces the migrations of the followers of Joseph Smith from upstate New York westward. Through Sept. 14. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. (869-8089)—"Visionary Daughters of Albion: A Bicentenary Celebration of Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Shelley" revisits the papers, publications, and personal effects of the mother and daughter, authors of "The Vindication of the Rights of Woman" and "Frankenstein," respectively. Salomon Room; through Sept. 13. (Open Mondays, and Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6.)

Schomburg Center, 515 Malcolm X Blvd., at 135th St. (491-2200)—"America's Reconstruction: People and Politics After the Civil War." An exhibition that captures the political and social achievements of that brief era with historical documents (the Emancipation Proclamation, a Klan screed) and more mundane objects (a ballot box, a carpetbag, a Union Army button from the freedmen's village of Mitchville, South Carolina). Through Nov. 1. (Open Mondays through Wednesdays, noon to 8; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Summer hours: unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Joaquín Torres-García (1874-1949)—An ample, well-mounted survey of works in many mediums by the Uruguayan artist and writer of manifestos, who at various stages espoused virtually every major style of modernism. Through July 30. (Krugier, 41 E. 57th St. 755-7288.)

"Private Histories: Four Centuries of Journal Keeping," at the Morgan Library.

"The True Poetry: The Art of María Izquierdo"—Like her contemporaries Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, the painter María Izquierdo mined the exorbitant and bloody dream world of Mexican life for images that resonated with the power of European Surrealism. The exhibition is strong in her portraits; some of her de Chiricoesque street scenes and landscapes have a lurid, almost campy appeal. Through July 27. (Americas Society, Park Ave. at 68th St. 249-8950. Open daily, except Mondays, noon to 6.)

Short List—**morris graves,** Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. 888-1122. Through July 31. . . . **whitfield lovell,** DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 247-2111. Through July 11. . . . **charles seliger,** Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St. 247-0082. Through Aug. 20. . . . **peter waite,** Winston Wächter, 111 E. 65th St. 327-2526. Through July 11.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

Arty Party—Lovers of warm white wine, rejoice: the galleries of Chelsea are throwing a block party on Wednesday, July 9. Twenty-eight spaces in the West Twenties, led by Morris Healy and Matthew Marks, are jointly opening their summer shows; they've promised to stay open till at least eight, and they'll undoubtedly party on if the turnout justifies it. The multimedia artist Marina Rosenfeld's L.A.-based Sheer Frost Orchestra—seventeen women who play the electric guitar with nail-polish bottles (a musical assembly that has been variously described as "entrancing," "mesmerizing," and "ineffably cheesy")—will be performing on 26th Street.

Oh, and there will be art, too: Matthew Marks (523 W. 24th St.) is presenting a show of four hip photographers; Morris Healy (530 W. 22nd St.) has an installation by the Swiss video artist Stefan Altenburger; the group show at Barbara Gladstone (515 W. 24th St.) includes the painter Richard Prince and the sculptors Vito Acconci and Robert Smithson (see "Margins," below); Max Protetch (511 W. 22nd St.) is showing works by such gallery artists as Glenn Ligon and Joyce Pensato, as well as drawings by Frank Lloyd Wright; Metro Pictures (519 W. 24th St.) is featuring Carroll Dunham, Cindy Sherman, and Gary Simmons; and Paula Cooper (534 W. 21st St.) has extended the closing date for Tony Smith's spectacular sculpture "Moondog" yet again, this time to July 25.

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"Margins"—A modest but intelligent group show featuring Conceptualist photo/text works by Sol LeWitt, Robert Smithson, Gordon Matta-Clark, and Vito Acconci. The highlight: a photo documenting Matta-Clark's most ambitious project, "Splitting" (1974), in which the artist literally cut a wooden house in two. Through July 30. (Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. 206-9300.)

Group Shows—At **cheim & read,** 521 W. 23rd St. (242-7727): A rewarding, agendaless exhibition of sculptures by Lynda Benglis, photographs by Adam Fuss, drawings by Serge Spitzer, and paintings by David Salle. What the works share historically or conceptually is not the issue—they simply look great together. The two early paintings by Salle stand out. Through July 31. . . . **kreps,** 529 W. 20th St. (741-8849): Videos, sculptures, photographs, and installations, by E. V. Day, John Hansel, Andy Harman, Deborah Warner, and Chris Wilder. Through July 27. . . . **baldacci,** 521 W. 21st St. (463-0919): Sculptures, paintings, and photographs, by St. Clair Cemin, James Hyde, Vik Muniz, and others. Through July 31.

Short List—**lawrence anderson** and **eric willmer,** Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. 243-5937. Open Wednesdays through Sundays; both shows through July 20. . . . **tom baldwin,** Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. 463-7770. Closed Mondays; through July 31.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Sol LeWitt / Frank Gehry—Large-scale wall drawings, most of them variations on the combination of matte and glossy blacks, by one of the founders of Conceptual art. They perfectly illustrate the Conceptualist tenet that the work need not be executed by the artist, or executed at all: LeWitt's drawings exist as simple instructions to be carried out by other hands. At the same time, their visual punch and grandeur completely demolish the notion that conceptual works are perforce dry and anemic. / Models of the architect's plans for One Times Square. Both shows through Aug. 15. (Ace, 275 Hudson St. 255-5599.)

Jeff Perrone—Despite its portentous title, "Asia, Africa, and the Americas" is lovely and unpretentious work, a quartet of wall pieces made of handcrafted fabrics (from Mali, Zaire, India, and other far-flung locales), painted on and reconfigured, crazy-quilt-style, with his own bright and allusive glazed-earthenware panels (exotic flowers, decorated feet, Krishna splitting a poppy tree, and so forth). Through Aug. 8. (Holly Solomon, 172 Mercer St. 941-5777.)

"1970"—A pleasingly tawdry installation by Art Club 2000, a collective of young artists, none of whom had been born by that purportedly pivotal year. In one room, a tumulus of black-and-white TVs reduces some of the era's best-known artists (Alex Katz, Carolee Schneemann, Isa Genzken, Vito Acconci, and others, all filmed in a portable studio re-created a few feet away) to a babble of talking heads. Around the corner, a video nook outfitted with groovy red couches offers a more respectful take on the same interviews, in individual doses and living color. Through Sept. 26. (American Fine Arts, 22 Wooster St. 941-0401.)

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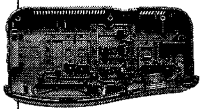

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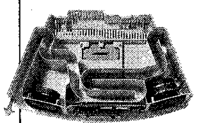

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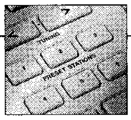

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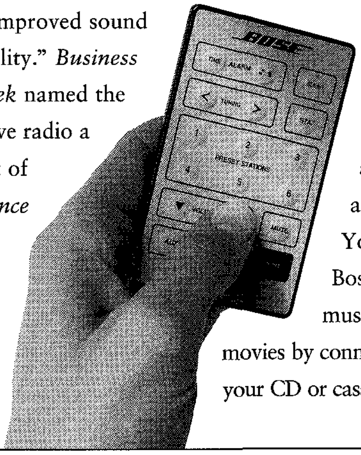

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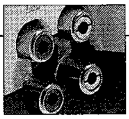

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Group Shows—At **FOTOUHI CRAMER,** 560 Broadway (431-1304): Paintings, sculptures, videos, posters, footprints, etc., loosely alluding to drugs, flowers, and the Summer of Love, by Karen Finley, Damien Hirst, Peter Max, Yoko Ono, Roxy Paine, et al. Through Aug. 2. . . . **BRAVIN POST LEE,** 80 Mercer St. (966-2676): Examples of the grisly-meat school of painting, including one by the genre's master, Francis Bacon, and another by Steve di Benedetto, of what looks like a celestial migraine; with the occasional Frank Stella or Chuck Close to cleanse the palate. Through July 18.

Short List—**HANS ACCOLA** and **DOUGLAS KOLK,** Zwirner, 43 Greene St. 966-9074. Both shows through Aug. 1. . . . **PETER NAGY,** Klagsbrun, 80 Mercer St. 925-5157. Through July 18. . . . **DONNA ROSENTHAL,** Steinbaum Krauss, 132 Greene St. 431-4224. Through July 12.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Lillian Bassman—A retrospective of vintage fashion photographs from the forties through the sixties. Through Aug. 1. (Gallery 292, at 120 Wooster St. 431-0292. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.) . . . ¶ A larger retrospective of fashion work and personal projects runs through Aug. 16 at the Fashion Institute of Technology. (Seventh Ave. at 27th St. 217-5800. Open Tuesdays through Fridays, noon to 8; Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

Marianne Courville—The artist's first solo show consists of grainily rephotographed frames from her family's home movies of the sixties and seventies: a light image of a tutued, waterskiing showgirl; an ominous sleek black car with a door open, ready for a family spin; an Easter-egg hunt in the woods of upstate New York. The selection is sharp, the compositions are strong, the palette is vivid, and there's a powerful, seductive personal history–public nostalgia dance going on that's very hard to resist. Through Aug. 15. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. 517-3766.)

George Daniell—Street images of New York City from the thirties and forties. Through Aug. 1. (Morthland, 225 Tenth Ave., at 23rd St. 242-7767. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

Larry Fink—Pictures from the worlds of boxing, fashion, politics, and Wall Street. Through Aug. 29. (Richardson, 560 Broadway. 343-1255.) . . . ¶ A show of the artist's boxing photographs is at the Whitney Museum, through Sept. 7.

Erich Hartmann—"In the Camps," a quietly thought-provoking, though oddly impassive, recent black-and-white series shot in the silent, ghost-filled barracks, gas chambers, and fenced-off fields of Nazi extermination camps. Through Aug. 9. (Leica, 670 Broadway. 777-3051. Closed Mondays, opens Saturdays at noon.)

Marc Riboud—The first New York gallery show of the globe-trotting French photojournalist (he once drove a used Land Rover from London to Calcutta) features vintage prints of scenes from Vietnam, Iran, the Soviet Union, China, Africa, and the United States. Through Aug. 1. (Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. 334-0010.) . . . ¶ A large show of Riboud's photographs made in China over the past forty years runs through Sept. 14 at the International Center of Photography. (1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. 860-1777. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

"Adolescents"—Inscrutable youth, by Sander, Arbus, Disfarmer, Ross, and others. Through Aug. 15. (Saul, 560 Broadway. 431-0747. Closed Mondays.)

"Backyards"—The domestic comedy, by, among others, William Eggleston, Walker Evans, Robert Frank, Susan Lipper, Richard Misrach, Walter Rosenblum, and Garry Winogrand. Through Aug. 15. (Mann, 42 E. 76th St. 570-1223.)

"Image"—A great grab bag of work by such artists as Bernd and Hilla Becher, Jan Groover, Sally Mann, Gerhard Richter, Sandy Skoglund, Hiroshi Sugimoto, and James Welling. Through July 25. (Fung, 537 Broadway. 334-6242. Opens at noon; closed Mondays.)

"The Insistent Image III" / **Larry Colwell** (1901-1972)—The Danziger gallery's annual group show of recent acquisitions includes works by Cameron, Cunningham, Weston, and Leibovitz. / Nudes from the forties and fifties by the Northern California photographer. Both shows through July 31. (130 Prince St. 226-0056. Closed Mondays.)

"New Narratives"—Real-life and staged scenarios by a handful of young artists, including Michael Lewis, Ashley Thayer, Malerie Marder, Mark Steinmetz, and Reuben Cox. Through Aug. 20. (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. 226-1220. Closed Mondays.)

"Oh Boy!"—Many interpretations of the phrase, by, among others, Evelyn Hofer, Danny Lyon, Jill Seymour, Paul Strand, and Pierre Verger. Through Aug. 8. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. 925-5510. Closed Mondays.)

"Water"—This summer's obligatory H_2O-fest looks mighty refreshing, with works on hand by William Henry Fox Talbot, August Sander, Robert Adams, Harry Callahan, Sally Mann, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Emmet Gowin, and Philip-Lorca diCorcia. Through Aug. 29. (Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 759-7999. Closes Fridays at 4.)

Short List—**KEN BOTTO,** Knowlton, 568 Broadway. 966-2625. Through July 19. . . . **MARILYN BRIDGES,** Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. 505-5555. Through July 31. . . . **JESSICA CRAIG-MARTIN AND LUCAS MICHAEL,** Boesky & Callery, 51 Greene St. 941-9888. Through July 25. . . . **ALEX HARSLEY,** June Kelly, 591 Broadway. 226-1660. Through Aug. 1. . . . **GEORGE PLATT LYNES,** Wessel and O'Connor, 242 W. 26th St. 242-8811. Through Aug. 15.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Asia Society.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

OPERA

New York Grand Opera—The company continues its survey of Verdi's twenty-eight operas with a staged production of "Jérusalem," in what seems (almost incredibly) to be its first staged production in New York. Essentially a rethinking and profound reworking of the 1842-43 "I Lombardi," it was created for the Paris Opéra, which premièred it in 1847. The libretto, this time in French, naturally Gallicized the earlier opera's plot, transforming its Milanese crusaders into a French army headed by Raymond of Toulouse. The government in Paris expressed its appreciation by admitting the thirty-three-year-old Verdi to the French Legion of Honor. Soprano Cynthia Springsteen, tenor Gerard Powers, and bass Valentin Peytchinov head the cast, and Vincent La Selva conducts. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 9 at 7:30. No tickets necessary. For rain-date information, call 245-8837.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall, Kurt Masur conducting. July 9 at 8: Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man," as well as Ornette Coleman's "Skies of America," for which the orchestra shares the stage for some ninety minutes with Coleman's jazz band, Prime Time. . . . ¶ July 12 and July 14 at 8: Wagner's opera "Tristan und Isolde," premièred in 1865, stands as a milestone in the history of music, thanks to both its epoch-making advances in the treatment of dissonance and its role in inspiring the aesthetic movement that became known as Symbolism. The audacity of the work startled even advanced musical thinkers: Berlioz (whose own "Roméo et Juliette" was an obvious antecedent) described it as "a sort of chromatic moan," and the critic Eduard Hanslick, never one to pull a punch, wrote, "The Prelude to 'Tristan und Isolde' reminds me of the old Italian painting of a martyr whose intestines are slowly unwound from his body on a reel." This concert comprises the opera's beginning and end in the famous "Prelude and Liebestod" conflation, Wagner's Five "Wesendonck-Lieder" (which the composer wrote while working on the opera, and even identified as "Studies for 'Tristan' "), and Hans Werner Henze's "Tristan, Preludes for Piano, Tape, and Orchestra," a complex 1965 work that pays tribute not only to Wagner's "Tristan" but also to that work's medieval forebears. Soprano Deborah Voigt is featured in the Wagner selections, and Homero Francesch is the soloist in the Henze. (875-5030.)

Manhattan Chamber Orchestra—Trinity Church's Brahms on Broadway series continues as Richard Auldon Clark conducts the orchestra in the composer's Symphony No. 1. (Broadway at Wall St. July 10 at 1. Admission by contribution.)

Goldman Memorial Band—The ensemble concludes its free summer series in the Central Park Bandshell, with a program that ranges from a new piece by Henry Brant ("Festive 80") to some of the works it has performed most frequently in its eighty-year history, including Berlioz's "Rakóczy March," Suppé's "Light Cavalry Overture," Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture," and the band's signature piece, Edwin Franko Goldman's "On the Mall" March, written for the bandshell's dedication in 1923. (Mid-Park at 72nd St. July 10 at 5.)

Pianist Dubravka Tomsic, in recital at Tanglewood.

KAREN CALDICOTT

RECITALS

"Music in the Garden"—Outdoor performances of piano trios by Fauré and Beethoven (in E-Flat Major, Op. 1, No. 1), as well as Mendelssohn's D-Major Cello Sonata. (Church of the Holy Trinity, 316 E. 88th St. July 9 at 7:15.)

Bargemusic—July 10 at 7:30 and July 13 at 4: Charles Abramovic performs five movements from Book Two of Debussy's Preludes; string-playing colleagues join him for Mozart's Trio in B-Flat Major (K. 502) and Fauré's C-Minor Piano Quartet. . . . ¶ July 11 at 7:30: Violinist Carmit Zori and Mr. Abramovic offer sonatas by Mozart, Janáček, Schumann (in A Minor), and Respighi, in addition to Bartók's First Rhapsody. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-4061.)

Essential Music—The modern-music group celebrates its tenth anniversary with a three-day retrospective festival at the Kitchen. July 11 at 8: Feldman's "Between Categories," plus music by Cage, David Jackman, Johanna Beyer, and Peter Garland. . . . ¶ July 12 at 8: Works by Charles Wood, John Kennedy, Kurt Schwitters (his "Ursonate"), William Russell, Dary John Mizelle, and Cornelius Cardew. . . . ¶ July 13 at 3: William Duckworth's "Revolution" and Alvin

Lucier's "Music for Baritone and Two Pure Wave Slow Sweep Oscillators," as well as pieces by Robert Ashley, James Tenney, Mr. Kennedy, and Kyle Gann. (512 W. 19th St. 255-5793.)

Summergarden—The Museum of Modern Art's outdoor concert series continues with string quartets by Karel Husa (his Third), Chinary Ung (his "Spiral III"), Stefan Wolpe, and Reza Vali (his "Folk Songs, Set No. 11B"). Advanced students and recent graduates of the Juilliard School perform. (14 W. 54th St. July 11-12 at 8:30. No tickets necessary.)

Essex String Quartet—The young foursome plays Mozart's Quartets in D Major (K. 499) and A Major (K. 169). (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 718-885-2478. July 13 at noon.)

Ilan Rechtman—The pianist performs sonatas by Scarlatti, Bach's Partita No. 5, and pieces by Chopin (including his Ballades No. 1 and No. 3). (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. July 13 at 6 and 8. No tickets necessary.)

Paul Harris and **Iris Regev**—The double bassist and the cellist share a recital, with the former playing sonatas by Bottesini, Handel, and Henry Eccles, and the latter performing Schumann's "Fantasiestücke" (Op. 73). Pianist Ilan Rechtman assists. (Mansfield Hotel, 12 W. 44th St. July 14 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—Eleven players, plus guitarist Jorge Caballero, offer eight concertos by Vivaldi, including "Spring" and "Summer" from "The Four Seasons." (Central Park Bandshell, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 15 at 7. No tickets necessary.)

Robert MacDonald—Playing an hour-long recital of organ works by Mendelssohn (his Sonata No. 1), Petr Eben, and Bach (the "Wedge" Prelude and Fugue), as well as his own transcription of music from Bizet's "Carmen." (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. July 15 at 7. Admission by contribution.)

OUT OF TOWN

Caramoor—July 10 at 4:15: Baritone Douglas Webster and pianist Jon Klibonoff perform lieder, arias, and Broadway numbers. . . . ¶ July 11 at 8: The Mozartean Players, a period-instrument trio, perform two of the great piano trios from the first half of the nineteenth century: Schubert's in E-Flat Major and Mendelssohn's in D Minor. . . . ¶ July 12 at 8:30: The Orchestra of St. Luke's, with Maximiano Valdes on the podium, offers Saint-Saëns's "Havanaise" and his Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso (with violinist Ayako Yoshida), Rodrigo's "Concierto de Aranjuez" (featuring guitarist Manuel Barrueco), and Bizet's Symphony in C. . . . ¶ July 13 at 5:30: Music for two guitars, performed by the Duo Assad. (Katonah, N.Y. 914-232-1252.)

Tanglewood—July 10 at 8:30: Pianist Dubravka Tomsic performs works by Mozart, Brahms, Ravel, and Chopin (his four Ballades). . . . ¶ July 11 at 8:30: Seiji Ozawa leads the Boston Symphony Orchestra in Brahms's Violin Concerto (with Maxim Vengerov) and his Symphony No. 4. . . . ¶ July 12 at 8:30: John Williams conducts the Boston Pops in a concert of music he wrote for the "Star

● ●

LISTENING BOOTH

From Mitteleuropa—To the slight extent that the Moravian composer **alois hába** (1893-1973) is known today, it is as an audacious modernist who worked in telescoped harmonies, tone clusters, and quarter tones. But Tomáš Víšek's winning recital of piano works by Hába (Supraphon SU 3146-2-131) stresses that composer's lighter side. Except for the concluding "Six Moods" (Op. 102), the pieces show how an inquiring musical mind melded an advanced idiom with popular forms—the blues, the waltz, the shimmy, the tango, the Boston.

Light Czech music of an earlier era flowed from the pen of **josef triebensee** (1772-1846), a native of southern Bohemia who distinguished himself in Vienna. Today he is mainly remembered for his wind arrangements of music by Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert, but the MDG Gold label has issued two of his original works played on period instruments by the Consortium Classicum (MDG 301-0626-2). Both have curious instrumentation: one is a Concertino for piano with wind-band accompaniment, while the other, a Grand Quintet dedicated to Beethoven's important patron Prince Lobkowitz, is for the rich-toned combination of clarinet, English horn, basset horn, bassoon, and piano—a sound you are not likely to have heard before.

Speaking of the Viennese classics, you might make **singphonic schubert, vol. 2** (CPO 999-398-2) your final obeisance to the Schubert bicentennial. Don't let the tacky title prevent you from enjoying the work of Die Singphoniker, a German sextet that offers some of the most amazing men's ensemble singing on record. This second installment in a five-part series that will commit all the composer's hundred-odd part-songs to disk, many for the first time, is devoted almost entirely to a-cappella works (using one singer per part) on texts by Schiller, with a couple of Goethe poems and a placid setting of the "Salve Regina" (D. 811) thrown in for good measure. The group's shared sense of intonation, enunciation, and phrasing produces performances so accurate they sometimes sound like the product of a synthesizer, but its emotional commitment is very human indeed. These part-songs, which numbered among Schubert's best-known works during his lifetime (though they're among his least known today), don't vie with the late symphonies and sonatas as musical testaments, but they fill out our understanding of the more intimate, convivial side of this always surprising composer.

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There's **Christopher Moore's *ISLAND OF THE SEQUINED LOVE NUN,*** a novel that is as quirky as its title. In this off-center look at cargo cults, messiahs and mad doctors, Moore strands a defrocked former pilot for a large cosmetics firm among cannibals, sex goddesses, and talking fruit bats on a Micronesian island hell. The cult of Christopher Moore fans has been growing steadily nationwide, and this latest tale is a good indication why.

In 1945, **Maj. Gen. Charles W. Sweeney** commanded the atomic bombing run on the Japanese city of Nagasaki. His book, ***WAR'S END,*** is a first-person chronicle of what is arguably the most significant single event of the twentieth century: the employment of atomic weapons during wartime. Neither apology nor whitewash, this book is living history written by a man who played a leading role in a drama that shaped the world we live in today.

Author **J.R. Dunn's *DAYS OF CAIN*** asks the question: What would we do with the power to eradicate the evils of the past? The answer is anything but cut-and-dried. Dunn's novel of a future renegade's plan to prevent the Holocaust doesn't shy away from the difficult issues of morality and responsibility. And in the end it leaves us questioning our own hearts as well.

We'll talk again.

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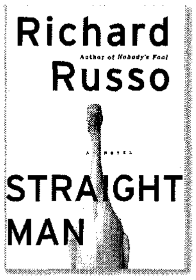
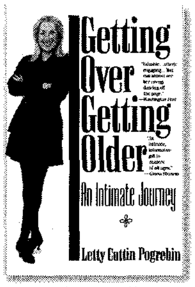


Join us when Richard Russo, author of the acclaimed *Nobody's Fool,* reads from and signs copies of his new novel *Straight Man.* This witty tale follows Hank Devereaux through his hilarious first week as the unlikely chairman of a university English department.

Letty Cottin Pogrebin

Wednesday, July 16th, 7:30-8:30 PM
Upper West Side, 2289 Broadway at 82nd Street
Reading • Signing



Meet bestselling author and founding editor of *Ms.* magazine Letty Cottin Pogrebin when she reads from and signs copies of *Getting Over Getting Older,* a heart-warming and wise work that offers women a new perspective on midlife.

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Wars" trilogy. . . . ¶ July 13 at 2:30: The Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra plays Bernstein's "Facsimile"; Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 3 and Dvořák's F-Minor Romance (both featuring Isaac Stern); and Brahms's Symphony No. 1. Robert Spano conducts. (Lenox, Mass. 413-637-1600.)

Opera Festival of New Jersey—July 11 at 8: "Faust." . . . ¶ July 12 at 8: Barber's "Vanessa." . . . ¶ July 13 at 2: The final performance of "La Cenerentola," performed in English. (Lawrenceville School, Lawrenceville, N.J. 609-279-1795.)

Glimmerglass Opera—July 12 at 8: "Madama Butterfly." . . . ¶ July 13 at 2: Gluck's "Iphigénie en Tauride." (Cooperstown, N.Y. 607-547-2255.)

Maverick Concerts—The Miami String Quartet, never an ensemble to drift into the comfort of hackneyed programming, offers three quartets that don't surface very often, by Grieg, Hindemith (his Third), and Saint-Saëns (his First). (Woodstock, N.Y. 914-679-8217. July 13 at 3.)

Music Mountain—The Penderecki String Quartet plays Mozart's Quartet in C Major (K. 157), Mendelssohn's Quartet in A Major (Op. 13), and, with the assistance of Francine Kay, Dvořák's Piano Quintet in A Major (Op. 81). (Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126. July 13 at 3.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

May I Have This Splash?—In Myanmar (or, as it used to be called, Burma), one of the traditional places for young men to court women is the New Year Water Festival, a three-day affair held each summer. "It's like a Burmese version of Mardi Gras, the last chance to have fun before the start of the rainy season," explains Kyaw Tha Hla, the executive director of the Thingyan Association, a group devoted to the promotion of Burmese culture. In Hla's native Rakhaing region, on the western coast, the festival revolves around teak canoes, elaborately carved and decorated, which are mounted on stilts and filled with water; access to them is controlled by local women. A prospective suitor approaches and requests a cup from one of the women. After a successful, or not so successful, conversation, the two douse each other. This Sunday, the Thingyan Association presents a local version of the event—one afternoon long, one aluminum canoe, more splashing than courting, and children with water pistols. Bring a change of clothes. (Cross Island Y.M.C.A, 238-10 Hillside Ave., Bellerose, Queens. July 13, from 11 to 5.)

Storming the Party—A pre-Bastille Day street fair sponsored by the French Institute–Alliance Française, with French food, dancing, and music. (60th St. between Park and Fifth Aves., on July 13, from 1 to sunset. . . . **Note:** Revellers awaiting Florent's annual Bastille Day fête on Gansevoort Street will have to be patient: it's next Sunday, July 20.)

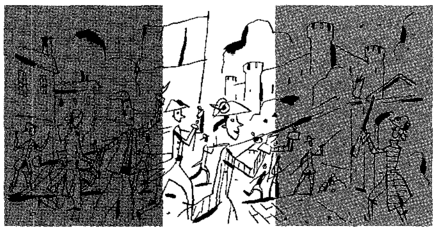
Talk—July 15 at 6:30: Claudine Brown, an arts administrator, moderates a panel discussion on cultural diversity and the arts, with Stephen Brier, executive director of the Center for Media and Learning; Andrea Simon, an independent filmmaker; and Catharine R. Stimpson, an editor of *Signs: A Journal of Women in Culture and Society.* (Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. 423-3224.)

Readings—July 10 at 7:30: Poets Rick Pernod, Ngoma, and Sandra Maria Esteves, among others, read from the works of the erstwhile Black Panther and current death-row inmate Mumia Abu-Jamal. (Labyrinth Books, 536 W. 112th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ July 10 at 8:30: Writers Paul Beatty, Lois-Ann Yamanaka, and Junot Díaz read from their work. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary.)

BOOK CURRENTS

A Revolution Shelved

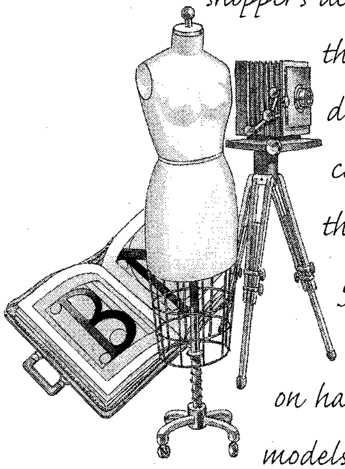
Liberty is in the air. You've barely recovered from the Fourth of July when you see the French enjoying their version of it, marking the storming of the Bastille, in 1789. The French Revolution may not have been so great for the French—opinions differ—but it was a godsend for the scribbling classes. "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive," Wordsworth memorably wrote a decade later, in "The Prelude." Half a century on, Victor Hugo turned history into historical fiction in **Ninety-three** (available from Carroll & Graf). And Thomas Carlyle's horrific account, **The French Revolution**, became for many English speakers the standard view, especially after Dickens used it as the basis for **A Tale of Two Cities.**


FRANÇOIS AVRIL

Why has the subject continued to fascinate writers? Hilary Mantel, whose own obsession with the period recently produced a massive historical novel, **A Place of Greater Safety** (Atheneum), thinks the reason is the pace of events. "You can focus the beam of your imagination on a period of five years, and all the stories you'd ever want to tell are wrapped up in it," she says. Even where the historical setting is superficial, as in Baroness Orczy's **The Scarlet Pimpernel**—a musical version of which comes to Broadway this October—it lends an inimitable frisson.

In this century, historians have moved from the largely celebratory narrative of Jules Lefebvre's **The French Revolution** (Columbia) to the revisionist approaches of François Furet's **Revolutionary France** (Blackwell) and Simon Schama's **Citizens** (Vintage). The varying historical interpretations have themselves become a subject of study in Steven Laurence Kaplan's **Farewell Revolution** (Cornell), which claims that the 1989 bicentennial provoked a shift to the political right among historians. One eminent scholar, Theodore Zeldin, even claims that the French Revolution is "a dead subject": "The Fourteenth of July isn't about the French Revolution," he notes, "it's about how the French see themselves." In fact, the more biographical approach of recent histories brings us close to the outlook of novelists like Mantel. In her preface she writes: "The reader may ask how to tell fact from fiction. A rough guide: anything that seems particularly unlikely is probably true."

SHOWCASING THE VISUAL ARTS.



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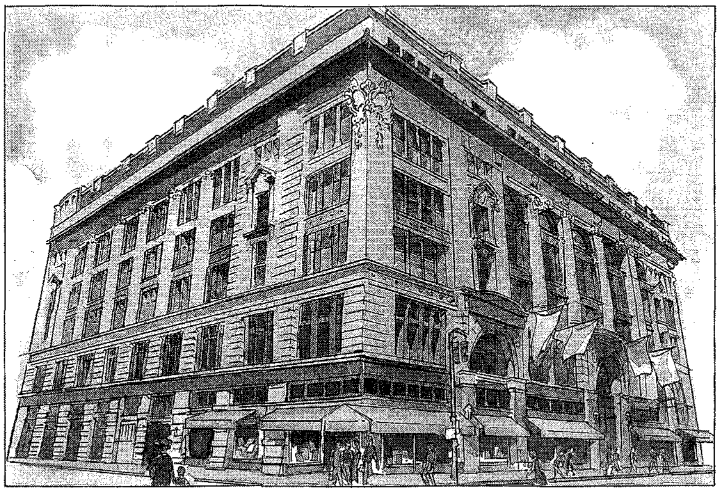

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THE MOVIES

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

Brilliant Lies—Anthony La Paglia, Gia Carides, and Zoe Carides star in a drama about a sexual-harassment complaint and its effects on a family. Directed by Richard Franklin, from a play by David Williamson. Opening July 11. (Quad Cinema.)

Contact—Jodie Foster plays an astronomer who receives a message from outer space, in a movie based on Carl Sagan's 1985 novel. With Matthew McConaughey, John Hurt, James Woods, and Tom Skerritt. Directed by Robert Zemeckis. Opening July 11.

4 Little Girls—A documentary by Spike Lee, about the 1963 church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama. Opening July 9. (Film Forum.)

Shall We Dance?—A former professional dancer takes a middle-aged businessman as a student and rediscovers the pleasures of her art, in a film directed by Masayuki Suo. In Japanese. Opening July 11. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Shooting Porn—A documentary about the gay blue-movie industry in Hollywood, written and directed by Ronnie Larsen. Opening July 11. (Cinema Village.)

A Simple Wish—Michael Ritchie's fantasy comedy pits a good, if bumbling, fairy (Martin Short) and his young charge (Mara Wilson) against two evil fairies (Kathleen Turner and Amanda Plummer). Opening July 11. (Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, and National Twin.)

This World, Then the Fireworks—A film noir based on Jim Thompson's 1955 short story about corrupt siblings (Billy Zane and Gina Gershon) setting up a new con. Directed by Michael Oblowitz. Opening July 11. (Quad Cinema.)

CURRENT FILMS

(The signed notes are by Bruce Diones, Sarah Kerr, Anthony Lane, and Terrence Rafferty. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given. Theatre information is listed on page 28.)

Addicted to Love—A desperately misbegotten screwball comedy. Matthew Broderick plays a dreamy astronomer who comes to New York to win back his girlfriend (Kelly Preston), who's moved in with a Frenchman (Tcheky Karyo); Meg Ryan plays the Frenchman's jilted fiancée, a tough New Yorker. Robert Gordon's creepy, contrived screenplay has Broderick and Ryan teaming up to stalk their exes, then falling in love with each other, but together the two stars plumb new lows in sexual chemistry. Directed by Griffin Dunne.—S.K. (First & 62nd Cinemas.)

Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery—A parody of James Bond films and the swinging London of the sixties. The jokes are hit and miss, but Mike Myers, who plays dual roles (he's the super-sleuth photographer of the title, who's awakened from a cryogenic sleep he entered in 1967, and he's also Dr. Evil) and has upped the ante by writing his own script, delivers every line with a gentle, toothy, hilarious abandon. And Elizabeth Hurley, as the spy who helps Powers make the transition to the nineties, has a fine, dry way of setting up Myers's better jokes. The director is Jay Roach.—B.D. (East 85th Street, Manhattan Twin, and National Twin.)

Batman & Robin—It seems like a long time since Tim Burton brought Batman to the screen in such style; we are now at No. 4 in the series, and everything that Burton contributed has long since been left behind. What remains is a monstrosity of nothingness—you won't get your money back, but at least you could ask to have your brain returned in one piece. George Clooney plays Batman; you could imagine a twitchy soul like Michael Keaton requiring a dark alter ego, but Clooney is so smilingly sure of himself that it's hard to understand why he would want to go into his cellar and shoehorn his rear into black leather. Chris O'Donnell plays Robin, and Alicia Silverstone gets the new part of Batgirl, plus all the very worst lines. The villains are Poison Ivy (Uma Thurman), the diamond-powered Mr. Freeze (Arnold Schwarzenegger), and, most noisome of all, Joel Schumacher, who directed, or at any rate arranged various stunts to look something like a film. Warner Bros. should be ashamed of itself, but the movie is making a pile of money, and where's the shame in that?—A.L. (7/7/97) (Astor Plaza, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII.)

Brassed Off—Mark Herman's surprisingly enjoyable study of the effect of brass-band music on a depressed mining community in the North of England. Pete Postlethwaite stars as the bandleader, Danny. The miners' main reason to keep playing is the arrival of the bewitching Gloria (Tara Fitzgerald), who is actually working for the people who are planning to shut the pit down. The movie emerges, to Herman's great credit, not as stiff dialectic but as kindly, flexible farce. Also with Ewan McGregor.—A.L. (5/26/97) (Angelika Film Center, Beekman, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

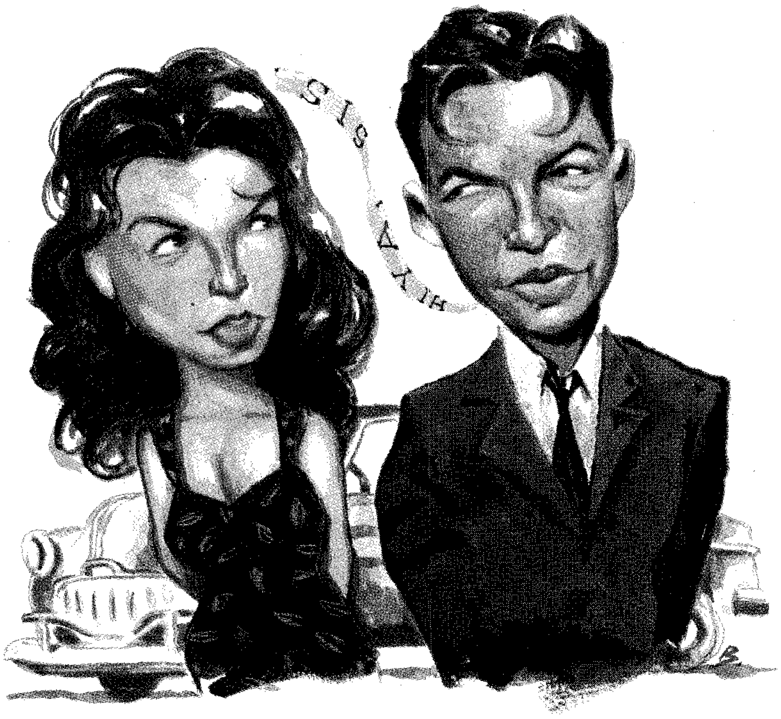
Breakdown—A well-made if not particularly original highway thriller, starring Kurt Russell as a man whose wife (Kathleen Quinlan) vanishes while they're vacationing in the Southwest. The director, Jonathan Mostow, milks a lot of anxiety out of dusty desert roads and creepy diners, building a fine suspense machine as Russell, in an impressive performance, tracks a menacing trucker (J. T. Walsh) who may be responsible for his wife's disappearance.—B.D. (Embassy 2.)

Chasing Amy—In Kevin Smith's low-budget comedy, a young comic-book artist (Ben Affleck) falls in love with a pretty, vivacious blonde (Joey Lauren Adams), who is, inconveniently, a lesbian. Smith doesn't have the skill to maintain a pleasurable sense of anticipation for an entire movie; this picture, his third, is as crummy-looking and as sluggishly paced as his début feature, the 1994 "Clerks."—T.R. (4/7/97) (Murray Hill Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas.)

Con Air—A bunch of America's most unreconstructed convicts, who are being flown to a new high-security jail, commandeer the plane and make a bid for freedom. The cast includes John Cusack as the good guy, John Malkovich as the bad guy, Nicolas Cage as the bad guy turned good, and Steve Buscemi as the bad guy turned extremely strange. The basic formula is now so exposed in its thinness and so blatant in its borrowings that the excitement soon grows horribly routine. Simon West directed.—A.L. (6/9/97) (Chelsea Cinemas, Embassy 1, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas.)

The Daytrippers—A Long Island schoolteacher (Hope Davis) suspects her husband (Stanley Tucci) of infidelity, and confesses her fears to her parents (Anne Meara and Pat McNamara), her sister (Parker Posey), and her sister's boyfriend (Liev Schreiber). The whole group then piles into the car and heads for Manhattan, hoping to pick up the elusive husband's scent. This low-budget début feature by the writer and director Greg Mottola is no big deal, but it has a terrific ensemble, and Mottola's affection for the characters is obvious.—T.R. (3/24/97) (Angelika 57.)

Donnie Brasco—The title character, played by Johnny Depp, is an undercover F.B.I. agent who infiltrates the Mafia by pretending to be a crooked jeweller—and also by pretending, even more successfully, to be incredibly dull. For some reason he is accepted into the Mob and befriended by Lefty (Al Pacino), a hoodlum on the wane. Pacino, as you would expect, gives a fine demonstration of sagging soulfulness, but it's hard to believe that people are still making movies that require us to feel sorry for mobsters. Paul Attanasio's script



Gina Gershon and Billy Zane in "This World, Then the Fireworks."

works hard to make fun of them, but Mike Newell's direction deadens any comedy in his quest for a violent mood piece.—A.L. (3/17/97) (Worldwide Cinemas.)

Dream with the Fishes—A black comedy written and directed by Finn Taylor, about an encounter between a suicidal young man (David Arquette) and a dying one (Brad Hunt). With Cathy Moriarty. (Angelika Film Center.)

The English Patient—Written and directed by Anthony Minghella, from the novel by Michael Ondaatje, this long and searching movie tangles together a number of stories and characters: Almásy (Ralph Fiennes) and Katharine (Kristin Scott Thomas), who have an affair in North Africa before the Second World War; a French-Canadian nurse (Juliette Binoche) who cares for the badly burned Almásy after the war, and the Sikh soldier (Naveen Andrews) *she* has an affair with; and the mysterious Caravaggio (Willem Dafoe), a scavenging thief who appears to know the secrets of Almásy's past. The triumph of the film lies not just in the force and range of the performances but in Minghella's creation of an intimate epic: vast landscapes mingle with the minute details of desire, and the combination is transfixing.—A.L. (11/25/96) (59th Street East Cinema.)

Face/Off—An F.B.I. agent (John Travolta) and a terrorist (Nicolas Cage) exchange identities, in John Woo's action thriller. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, New York Twin, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, State, 34th Street Showplace, and Waverly.)

Fall—Eric Schaeffer's drama centers on a romance between a New York City cabdriver (Schaeffer) and a married model (Amanda de Cadenet). (Angelika Film Center.)

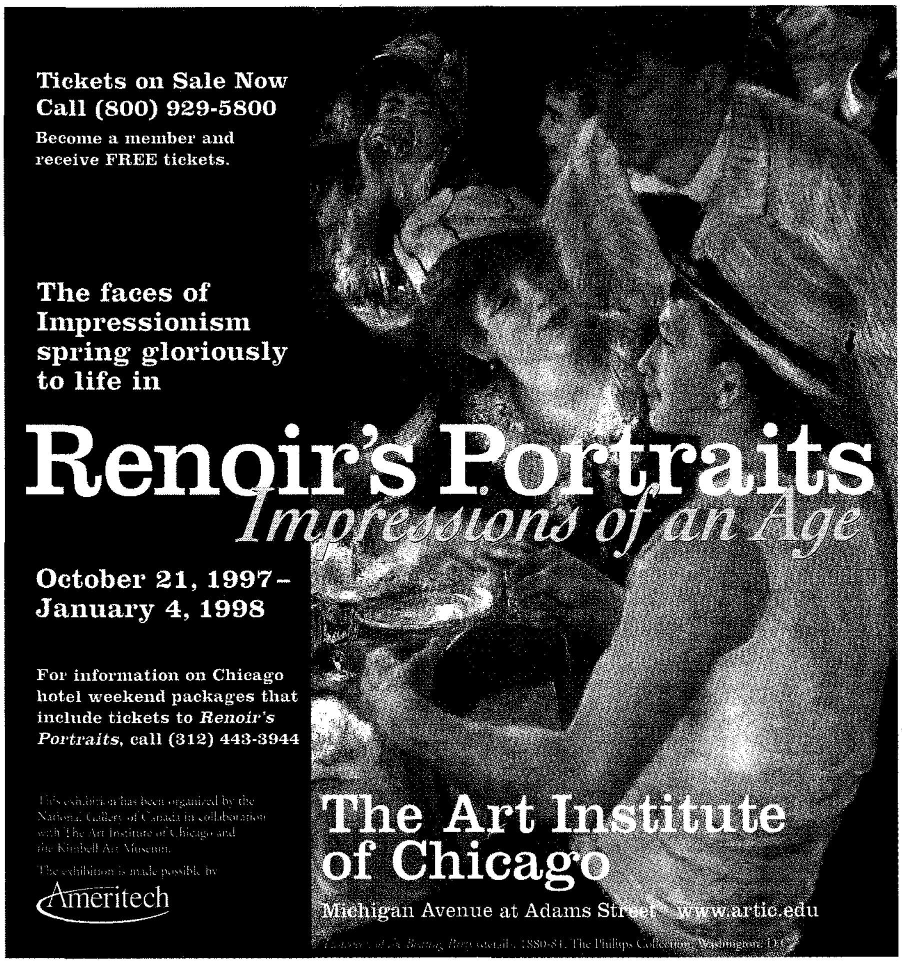
For Roseanne—A comedy detailing the lengths to which an Italian husband (Jean Reno) is willing to go to assure his dying wife (Mercedes Ruehl) the burial plot she wants. Directed by Paul Weiland. (Eastside Playhouse.)

Gabbeh—Director Mohsen Makhmalbaf's latest drama, inspired by the intricate carpets of Iranian nomads. In Farsi. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

Hercules—The new Disney animated adventure feels secondhand: the youthful hero is an obvious retread of Aladdin (all chin and forelock, but with weaker tunes), and the scary ambush sequence is set in exactly the same kind of valley that trapped Simba in "The Lion King." The only good news is the presence of James Woods as the voice of evil. ("The name is Hades, Lord of the Dead. Hi, how ya doing?") Otherwise, the picture is distinguished only in its Olympian money-grubbing—an unblushing will to sell itself and its spinoff products.—A.L. (7/7/97) (Cinema I, 86th Street East Twin, Guild, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Olympia, and Village East Cinemas.)

Kolya—A likable enough Czech reworking of a tried-and-true formula: a sort of "Kramer vs. Kramer" set in Prague, in 1988-89, at the dawn of the Velvet Revolution. The screenwriter, Zdenek Sverak, also plays the central character, a bachelor cellist who suddenly finds himself responsible for an adorable Russian five-year-old. The cellist slowly grows out of his selfishness, and his love for this child who doesn't speak his language points to the new, boundaryless world that's about to open up. Directed by Jan Sverak. In Czech.—S.K. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

Liar Liar—Tom Shadyac's movie stars Jim Carrey as a lying lawyer whose life is upended when his five-year-old son makes a birthday wish that, for exactly one day, his father will be incapable of telling a lie. As he peels away the layers of venal charm, you wait to discover an even more pungent venality beneath. Instead—guess what—he turns out to be a nice guy, and you feel let down when he finally surrenders to the forces of mush. But it's touching to find a director who believes in all sincerity that jokes about gas and pimples are, and always will be, inherently funny.—A.L. (3/31/97) (Worldwide Cinemas.)



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Luncheon of the Boating Party (detail), 1880-81. The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.

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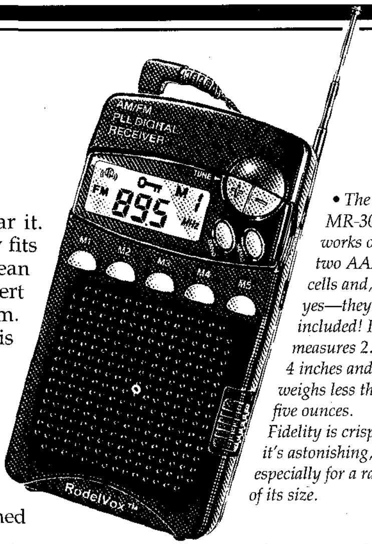

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The Lost World: Jurassic Park—Steven Spielberg's sequel to his 1993 blockbuster is, at its best, unmistakably the product of a master craftsman, and this time around he has found a way to amuse himself even as he cranks out a kind of movie that he has obviously outgrown. The director plays on our eagerness to be frightened by his mechanical beasts, and manipulates us so effortlessly that we begin to laugh at how primitive our responses are. With Jeff Goldblum, Julianne Moore, and Pete Postlethwaite. Screenplay by David Koepp.—T.R. (6/2/97) (Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Ziegfeld.)

Love! Valour! Compassion!—Equal-opportunity mawkishness. Joe Mantello's film version of the 1994 Terrence McNally play—he also directed it Off Broadway—hangs on to the Neil Simonesque structure of a group of gay men spending three summer weekends together at a country house. The group includes Stephen Spinella, John Benjamin Hickey, John Glover, Jason Alexander (as a stereotypical Broadway-loving queen), and Randy Becker (as a Latin hunk).—S.K. (Cinema 3rd Avenue and Quad Cinema.)

Men in Black—Barry Sonnenfeld's science-fiction comedy (a nineties take on a sixties idea of what the future would be like) is indolent, confident, and shy of risks. Tommy Lee Jones (very cool) and Will Smith (speedy and high-spirited) play government agents who spend their days policing the activities of resident aliens; the plot requires them to track down an outsized bug that lodges inside the body of a farmer (Vincent D'Onofrio), who travels to New York in order to destroy the entire planet. The story is perilously thin, but maybe that's deliberate—Sonnenfeld is far more concerned with texture. Still, whenever the camera wanders away from Jones and Smith your attention goes with it (even Linda Fiorentino, as a horny medical examiner, feels irrelevant to the action), and you may find yourself unable to remember anything about the movie the day after you see it.—A.L. (7/7/97) (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, Olympia, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII.)

My Best Friend's Wedding—In P. J. Hogan's romantic comedy, a writer (Julia Roberts) learns that her former lover and current best friend (Dermot Mulroney) is engaged to be married; she suddenly realizes that she's in love with him and resolves to sabotage the nuptials by any means necessary. For the first hour or so, Roberts's enthusiastic, sexy clowning energizes the picture, but then the filmmakers spoil our enjoyment: they allow dull good sense to triumph over their star's outsized appeal. Also with Cameron Diaz and Rupert Everett.—T.R. (6/16/97) (Criterion Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and Village East Cinemas.)

Night Falls on Manhattan—Yet another movie about New York City police corruption by Sidney Lumet. This one, starring Andy Garcia as a Manhattan D.A. prosecuting a drug king accused of shooting some cops, really belongs in a TV lineup. Lumet began his career, in the fifties, as a director of hard-hitting teleplays, and after years of Hollywood moviemaking he appears to have come full circle.—B.D. (Embassy 3 and Manhattan Twin.)

Out to Sea—A comedy by Martha Coolidge, about two dance hosts (Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau) on a cruise to the Caribbean. (Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea West, Cinema II, Lincoln Square, National Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and 34th St. East.)

The Pillow Book—A drama written and directed by Peter Greenaway, centering on a woman obsessed with having calligraphic messages inscribed on her body. With Vivian Wu, Yoshi Oida, and Ewan McGregor. In Japanese and English. (Angelika Film Center, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 68th St. Playhouse.)

Ponette—Writer-director Jacques Doillon's story of a four-year-old (Victoire Thivisol) who must come to terms with the sudden death of her mother. In French. (Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

La Promesse—Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne's powerful coming-of-age story stars Jérémie Rénier as Igor, a streetwise Belgian teen-ager who helps his scummy father (Olivier Gourmet) traffic in illegal immigrants. When Igor sees one of his father's hapless African victims fall off a ladder, he promises to protect the dying man's wife and child; his struggle to uphold his pledge turns into a morality tale permeated with a Dickensian indignation at evil. A risk-taking, original piece of work. In French.—S.K. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Scream—An entertaining horror comedy in which the director Wes Craven and his scriptwriter, Kevin Williamson, take the clichés of fright films and reinvigorate them with a cheeky knowingness: the victims are horror-movie aficionados who in many instances make the same mistakes they've joked about seeing made on screen. With help from an unusually strong cast—Drew Barrymore, Neve Campbell, Courteney Cox, and David Arquette all do smashing work—Craven wrings some real thrills from the familiar perils of all those teen-age gorefests.—B.D. (Embassy 4 and Worldwide Cinemas.)

Speed 2: Cruise Control—Just when she thought it was safe to go on the water, Sandra Bullock, who enjoyed such a swell ride in the first "Speed," winds up sharing a luxury cruise ship with a boring boyfriend (Jason Patric) and an ailing nut case (Willem Dafoe), who plants smoke bombs all over the place, screws up the computer systems, and tries to crunch the vessel into the side of an oil tanker. The trouble is that none of this is exactly hasty; even at full speed, the ship goes about as fast as a retired dolphin, and the director, Jan De Bont, is forced to stretch out the climax to the point where you're actually bored by so much disaster. The whole business, in fact, is amazingly slack compared to the original, and even to De Bont's last movie, "Twister." As for Patric, you keep wondering why a male model is doing all this heroic stuff with bombs and harpoon guns when he should be displaying a new swimwear line.—A.L. (7/7/97) (Chelsea Cinemas, Coronet Cinemas, Criterion Center, East 85th Street, Lincoln Square, and Village East Cinemas.)

Temptress Moon—A gigolo (Leslie Cheung) is ordered by his gangster boss to seduce an heiress (Gong Li) in the house where he was once a servant. Directed by Chen Kaige. In Mandarin. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Ulee's Gold—In Ulee Jackson, a widowed beekeeper living in the Florida panhandle, Peter Fonda has a role that makes virtues of his expressive limitations. The movie, written and directed by Victor Nunez, is designed to draw this lonely, quietly embittered man out of his emotional hibernation, and for once Fonda's very deliberate style feels appropriate: there's pain in it, and fear, and an awful kind of resignation. Also with Patricia Richardson.—T.R. (6/16/97) (Angelika Film Center, Gotham Cinema, and Regency.)

Underground—While there are many reasons to feel annoyed with Emir Kusturica's 1995 farce epic—its three-hour running time, its tuba-laden score, its frenetically overcrowded scenario of political allegories—this is still the richest, most delirious filmmaking in recent memory. The story covers fifty years of deception between two Yugoslav friends, Blacky and Marko, beginning in the Second World War, when Blacky and other anti-Nazi partisans bunker down in a secret underground cave manufacturing arms while Marko grows rich on the profits. After the war Marko keeps them in hiding by piping in recorded battle sounds and old news reports; he convinces them that the Nazis are still in power through Tito's regime and the subsequent nightmare of the civil war. The film is rude and disorganized, a black carnival of ghastly humor and brilliant imagery, the frame packed with an enormous amount of metaphorical information and Fellini-on-mescaline incongruities. As a visual fantasist, Kusturica rivals Terry Gilliam in sheer exuberance; he's a master of the go-for-broke shot. The picture takes time to get going, but when it does it's absolutely thrilling and unforgettable. In Serbo-Croatian.—B.D. (Anthology Film Archives.)

When the Cat's Away—An improvisational comedy, directed by Cédric Klapisch, about the search for a cat in Paris. In French. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

Wild America—Scott Bairstow, Devon Sawa, and Jonathan Taylor Thomas play brothers who travel across the country in 1967 with a 16-mm. camera—characters based on the wildlife documentarians Marty, Mark (who is one of the producers), and Marshall Stouffer. William Dear directed. (Chelsea West, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 72nd Street East, and Village East Cinemas.)

ALSO PLAYING

THE DEVIL'S OWN (reviewed in our issue of 4/7/97): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **FATHERS' DAY** (5/19/97): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **THE SAINT** (4/14/97): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **SLING BLADE:** Worldwide Cinemas.

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Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th St.
Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Carnegie Hall Cinemas, Seventh Ave. between 56th and 57th Sts.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinema I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema 3rd Avenue, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St.
Coronet Cinemas, Third Ave. at 59th St.
Criterion Center, Broadway at 44th St.
East 85th Street, First Ave. at 85th St.
Eastside Playhouse, Third Ave. at 55th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
86th Street East Twin, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Embassy 1, Broadway at 46th St.
Embassy 2, 3, and 4, Seventh Ave. at 47th St.
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
Gotham Cinema, Third Ave. at 58th St.
Guild, 33 W. 50th St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St. (757-2280).
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Manhattan Twin, Third Ave. at 59th St.
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
National Twin, Broadway at 44th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
Regency, Broadway at 67th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
68th St. Playhouse, Third Ave. at 68th St.
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
State, Broadway at 45th St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th St. East, 241 E. 34th St.
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Waverly 1 and 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between Eighth and Ninth Aves.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Anthony Lane, and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the listings following these notes.)

Band of Outsiders (1964)—The two heroes (Claude Brasseur and Sami Frey) begin by playacting crime and violence movies, then really act them out in their lives. Their girl (Anna Karina), wanting to be accepted, tells them there is money in the villa where she lives. And we watch, apprehensive and puzzled, as the three of them go through the robbery they're committing as if it were something in a movie—or a fairy tale. The film is like a reverie of a gangster movie as students in an espresso bar might remember it or plan it. It's as if a French poet took a banal American crime novel and told it to us in terms of the romance and beauty he read between the lines. This lyrical tragicomedy is perhaps Jean-Luc Godard's most delicately charming film. In French.—P.K. (Walter Reade Theatre; July 11-12.)

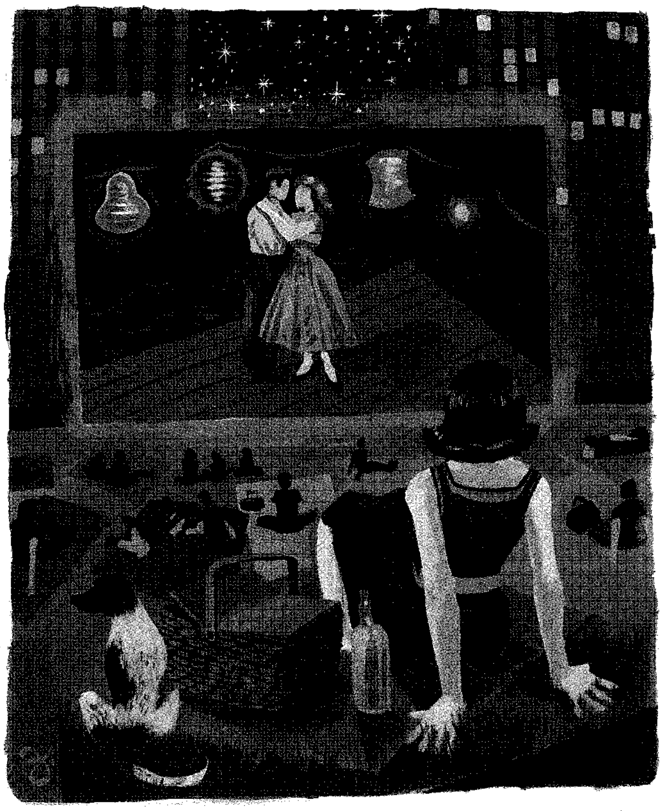
Cat People (1942)—The psychoanalyst (Tom Conway) calmly explains to his patient (Simone Simon) that her idea that she is turning into a member of the cat family is a fantasy; she silences him with fang and talon. Val Lewton made his name as a producer with this ironic horror film, produced for R.K.O. on a minuscule budget and directed by Jacques Tourneur. Lewton pictures aren't really very good, but they're so much more imaginative than most of the horror films that other producers were grinding out at the time that his ingenuity seemed practically revolutionary.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; starting July 15.)

Contempt (1963)—A ravishing new print brightens the glow of greatness that has always surrounded Jean-Luc Godard's willful and obsessive movie. It tells the story of Jerry Prokosch (Jack Palance), a great gaunt monster of a producer, who is putting together a film of the Odyssey; his director, Fritz Lang (playing himself); his screenwriter, Paul (Michel Piccoli); and Paul's wife, Camille (Brigitte Bardot), who falls for Jerry—she is a Penelope who couldn't wait for her wanderer to return. The picture is not simply an acid satire on filmmaking but a larger look at the way in which we helplessly cast others as the unwilling co-stars in our own lives. It sports the nimbleness of comedy while strolling defiantly in the direction of the tragic, and it emerges, after thirty-four years, as quite inexplicably moving. In French.—A.L. (7/7/97) (Film Forum 3.)

D.O.A. (1949)—The melodrama gears up immediately as the antihero (Edmond O'Brien) stumbles into a police station and reports his own imminent death. He tells the cops how he got poisoned during a fling in San Francisco and how he tracked the will-be murderers. This B movie has more pungency than most A movies. The director, Rudolph Maté, allows aberrant life to seep into the low-budget, high-concept production. Photographed by Ernest Laszlo, it unfolds in grungy, clammy black-and-white. The look suits the story's lived-in cynicism, as American as day-old apple pie.—M.S. (Film Forum 2; July 10-11.)

The Killing (1956)—Stanley Kubrick had made two pictures before this one, but this shrewdly worked-out suspense film, which he made at the age of twenty-seven, is the real beginning of his career. Centering on a racetrack robbery, it has fast, incisive cutting; a nervous, edgy style; and furtive little touches of characterization. The cast includes many familiar second-string actors, but they go through enough unfamiliar movements to keep one in an agreeable state of anxious expectation. Sterling Hayden is impressive as the ex-convict who plans the crime (there's a slight melancholy about him). With Elisha Cook, Jr., and fierce, tight Marie Windsor as his mismate, and the generally underrated fine actress Coleen Gray.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; July 12-13.)

Picnic (1955)—Kim Novak plays Madge, a small-town Kansas beauty for whom being beautiful isn't enough: she risks scandal when she dumps her well-connected beau (Cliff Robertson) for his best friend, a virile drifter (William Holden). This study of the roles that men and, especially, women in the rural Midwest play, from Madge's misfit smart-girl sister (Susan Strasberg) to a self-styled "old-maid schoolteacher" (Rosalind Russell, at her screeching worst), pegs each female character to a cross, and Joshua Logan's direction rams every nail home. But Novak's Madge is a fluid, unpredictable presence; her hip-swaying, shoulder-swinging dance with Holden's drifter is one of the most seductive explosions of passion in the movies. Daniel Taradash adapted William Inge's play; James Wong Howe did the handsome wide-screen cinematography.—M.S. (Bryant Park; July 14.)



At Bryant Park, Joshua Logan's "Picnic."

ZOHAR LAZAR

The Sandpiper (1965)—At the time it was released, Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, who had been the world's most highly publicized scandalous lovers during the making of "Cleopatra" only a couple of years before, had finally got married, and as the massive-headed Burton, looking more foreshortened than ever, eyed the portly Taylor in her Irene Sharaff poncho, and they delivered such lines as "I never knew what love was before" and "I've lost all my sense of sin," the people in the theatres could not contain themselves. The movie will probably never be quite as hilarious again, but it's a classic, no matter when you see it. Burton, an Episcopal clergyman, makes high-toned literary remarks to beatnik-atheist-artist Taylor, such as "I can't dispel you from my thoughts," and then, when he hates himself in the morning, she reassures him with "Don't you realize that what happened between us is *good?*" If that isn't enough, there's Charles Bronson playing a sculptor (posing for him, Taylor demurely cups her breasts with her hands—though they seem inadequate to the task). Vincente Minnelli directed from a script by Dalton Trumbo and Michael Wilson. With Eva Marie Saint as the clergyman's wife; she says bright things like "Thinking is a kind of prayer, isn't it?"—P.K. (A Different Light Bookstore; July 13.)

LATE RUNS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Film Forum 2 and 3, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—**theatre 2:** July 9: "Johnny Guitar" (1954, Nicholas Ray) and "Rancho Notorious" (1952, Fritz Lang). . . . July 10-11: "Detour" (1945, Edgar Ulmer) and "D.O.A." (†). . . . July 12-13: "The Killing" (†) and "Crime Wave" (1954, André DeToth). . . . July 14: "Stella Maris" (1918, Marshall A. Neilan; silent) and "Coquette" (1929, Sam Taylor; silent), both with Mary Pickford. . . . From July 15: "Cat People" (†) and "I Walked with a Zombie" (1943, Jacques Tourneur). . . . **theatre 3:** "Contempt" (†).

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A program of films written by Frances Marion. July 10 at 2:30 and July 14 at 6: "Peg o' My Heart" (1933, Robert Z. Leonard). . . . July 10 at 6: "Stella Dallas" (1925, Henry King; silent). . . . July 11 at 2:30: "The Secret Six" (1931, George W. Hill). . . . July 11 at 6: "The Scarlet Letter" (1926, Victor Seastrom; silent). . . . July 11 at 8: "Midnight Mary" (1933, William Wellman). . . . July 12 at 2: "The Big House" (1930, Hill). . . . July 12 at 5: "Hold Your Man" (1933, Sam Wood). . . . July 13 at 2 and July 15 at 6: "The Prize-fighter and the Lady" (1933, W. S. Van Dyke). . . . July 13 at 5: "Going Hollywood" (1933, Raoul Walsh). . . . July 14 at 2:30: "Anna Christie" (1930, Clarence Brown). . . . July 15 at 6: "Secrets" (1933, Frank Borzage). . . . ¶ July 15 at 2: "The General" (1927, Buster Keaton and Clyde Bruckman; silent).

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (875-5600)—A program of films by Jean-Luc Godard; in French, with English subtitles. July 9 at 2, 4, 6, 7:45 and 9:30 and July 10 at 2, 4, and 9: "For Ever Mozart" (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.). . . July 11 at 2, 6, and 9:30 and July 12 at 6:15 and 9:45: "Nouvelle Vague" (1990). . . . July 11 at 4 and 7:45 and July 12 at 4:20 and 8: "Band of Outsiders" (†). . . . July 13 at 4:15 and 7:45 and July 14 at 4 and 7:45: "Breathless" (1959). . . . July 13 at 6 and 9:30 and July 14 at 2, 6, and 9:30: "Every Man for Himself" (1979). . . . ¶ July 10 at 6:30: "Red-boy 13" (1996, Marcus van Bavel). . . . ¶ July 12-13 at 2: "Some Like It Hot" (1959, Billy Wilder).

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St.—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On July 13 at 7, the feature will be "The Sandpiper" (†).

Bryant Park, Sixth Ave. at 42nd St.—Mondays, starting at dusk: free drive-in-style moviegoing, beginning with Looney Tunes and coming attractions. The feature on July 14 will be "Picnic" (†). (Rain date is the following night.)

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—July 12 at 2: "Chinatown" (1974, Roman Polanski). . . . July 12 at 4:30: "The Two Jakes" (1990, Jack Nicholson). . . . July 13 at 2: "Point Blank" (1967, John Boorman). . . . July 13 at 4: "The Long Goodbye" (1973, Robert Altman).

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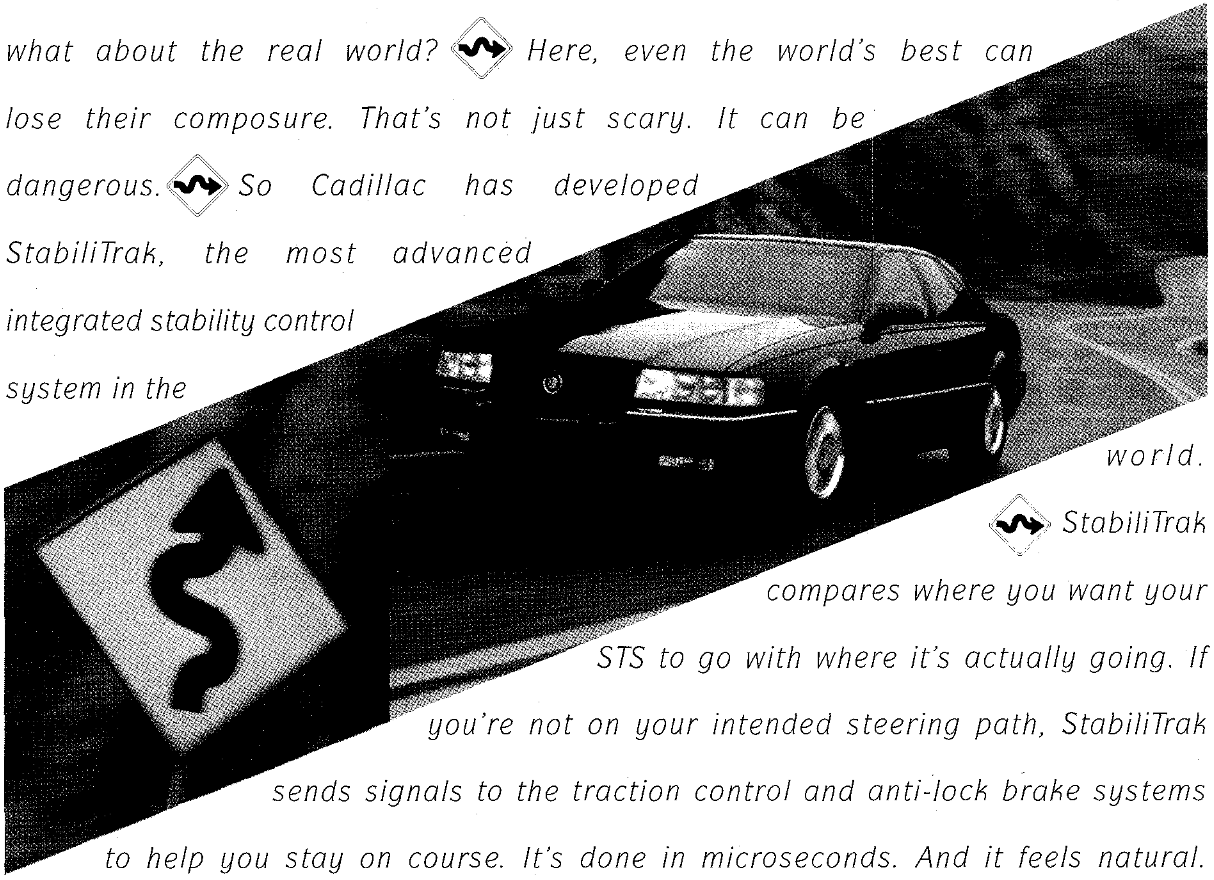

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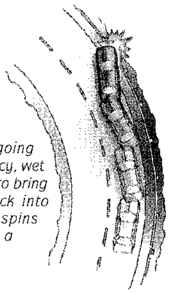

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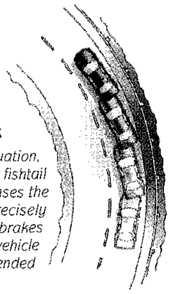

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THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

INK

Thomas Pynchon finally loses the game of hide-and-seek.

The zeal that Thomas Pynchon has brought to the task of maintaining the anonymity of his person even while, as the author Thomas Pynchon, he courts the public through large, ambitious works has long offered a provocation to investigative journalists and ardent fans. The separation of the two selves has felt like a very Pynchonian meta-game; and last month Pynchon-the-person finally lost. A British journalist, James Bone, used an on-line service to learn the author's Upper West Side address and shot a blurry photograph of him leaving his home with his son. Bone published an article describing his pursuit of Pynchon in the June 14th issue of the London *Times Sunday Magazine.* In the accompanying photo, Pynchon looks to be a large man with glasses and a silvery mustache; he stands out only because on a warm day he is wearing a heavy black anorak with the hood pulled up—evidence of either a bad cold or a serious obsession.

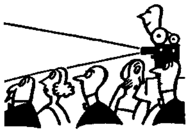
Since the article wasn't widely seen here, and since Pynchon's features were too indistinct to make him recognizable on the checkout line at Zabar's, he might have viewed the damage as strictly symbolic. But on June 25th Michael Baroni, the director of legal affairs at Henry Holt, Pynchon's publisher, sent the *Times* a letter. "We at Holt are outraged" by the publication of the photograph, the letter began, and noted, "Pynchon does not allow his or his son's photograph to be taken or used in any public context whatsoever." Baroni added, bizarrely, "Holt requires all publicity requests for its authors be submitted to . . . our publicity department," as if he considered Bone to be, say, a talk-show booker rather than a newspaperman pursuing a story. The letter demanded that the *Times* immediately hand over all negatives and destroy all copies of the photo. If the paper refused, the attorney concluded, "We shall use every means at our disposal to protect our interest as stated above."

The letter places Holt in the odd position of issuing dire threats to quash what is plainly an act of free speech. Victor A. Kovner, a New York attorney who specializes in free-speech issues, says, "Lawyers should remind their publishers that they erode First Amendment rights when they even threaten to sue." And lawyers at other publishing houses agree that Holt has no legal grounds for action against Bone or the *Times.* "It's a strange letter," one attorney said. "They have no legal interest in this at all." If there were an invasion-of-privacy claim, it would belong to Pynchon himself, not to his publisher. But New York State has very negligible privacy laws, and news photographers can legally take a picture of anyone in public so long as they don't physically harass him in the process. Baroni declines to say what laws he feels the *Times* has broken. Alasdair Brett, one of the *Times'* chief lawyers, says that he is still researching the allegation—whatever it is—but he thinks it looks "spurious."

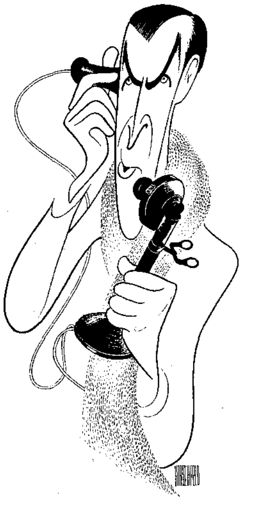
There is, of course, a moral issue that the bogus legal issues have obscured. Pynchon-the-person may well have a right to his solitude, no matter how eccentrically he claims it. The photograph, though, is as much the result of technological progress as it is of moral decline: the Internet makes it possible to locate virtually anyone. The absolute privacy that Pynchon has maintained is itself an artifact of the past. And if there is any novelist who can appreciate the way that technological change has unmoored the moral principles of another era, it is, after all, Thomas Pynchon. —James Traub

THE PICTURES

Tough guy and nice guy. Freeze-frame. Fade to black.

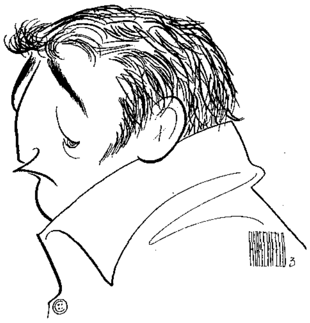


Robert Mitchum died last week of emphysema, while James Stewart succumbed to heart failure. (As if.) The more probable cause is that someone asked God what America was like, and in order to save time He decided to call a couple of expert witnesses. Together, the pair of them cover such a range; if Stewart, especially in his early years, incarnated a national talent for hopefulness, Mitchum sometimes resembled a one-man Depression. The script of "It's a Wonderful Life" was vetted for such words as "dang," "lousy," and "jerk," whereas Mitchum's lifelong dialogue seemed to consist of little else. Stewart was a Princeton graduate, and one of the first stars to enlist in the Second World War, flying twenty bombing missions and retiring from the Air Force Reserves in 1968 with the rank of brigadier general; Mitchum was jailed for marijuana possession in 1948. One was a string bean who could wear a tuxedo, a cowboy hat, or a plaster cast on his leg; the other was basically a pair of shoulders wrapped in a trenchcoat.



Both of them, of course, were Baileys. In 1946, Stewart starred as George Bailey

ILLUSTRATIONS BY AL HIRSCHFELD, COURTESY OF THE MARGO FEIDEN GALLERIES LTD., NEW YORK



in "It's a Wonderful Life"; a year later, Mitchum played Jeff Bailey in "Out of the Past." The two films could hardly be more distinct. The first gazes back over a man's uneventful existence and finds it to be the main event in the lives of others; the second also digs around in its hero's history, but what it unearths is the sourness of deceit. Mitchum is conned by the murderous Jane Greer, as he would later fall prey to Jean Simmons in "Angel Face"; tough guys are supposed to know how to handle themselves, and the blistering thought that women can handle them even better was written all over Mitchum's face. (Was it a dame that broke his nose?) Years before Brando, he made it sexy to be morose and mumbling—an impossible task, every bit as demanding as Stewart's mission to take on roles that would, in the hands of anyone else, appear sentimental and line them with his own brand of toughness. Jimmy Stewart was the best thing that ever happened to Frank Capra: there was something cloying, a kind of bullying naïveté, in the director's clamor for provincial decency until Stewart came along and stirred it up.

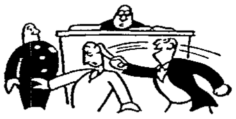
Men like Mitchum and Stewart suggest not just what cinema is all about but what, in a more difficult sense, it is for. We face up to them, and they, in turn, show us a few more angles at which we can—if we choose—face the prospect of our own lives. This is not a matter of mimicry, although the Hollywood tour guides who practice their Jimmy Stewart impressions, like the Woody Allen who pulled his lips tight against his teeth in "Play It Again, Sam," are not simply indulging a whim or a knack; they want to stretch their imaginations and work out how much cooler or more approachable the world must be to Stewart or Bogart. Movies lend grace to the smallest gesture, casually inflating it into the attitude of a generation, and urging us to wonder exactly what it stands for. Stewart opened and closed his long farm-boy vowels like a trumpeter using a mute, although whether it was the sound of hesitation or of a more languorous, even calculated, confidence is hard to say. As for Mitchum's hooded eyes: Is he waking from sleep and priming himself for action, or is he exhausted by daylight's tribulations? On such niceties rest the illusions of a million moviegoers, as well as our more clouded fears of disillusionment.

The death of a movie star, unlike that of a loved one, is embarrassingly easy to overcome; you just switch on the TV and carry on watching, drinking your fill. Not all of us talk to rabbits, and even fewer of us, sadly, get engaged to Grace Kelly; but the Stewart of "Harvey" and "Rear Window," the most consoling actor who ever lived, reassures us that one could do such outlandish things and still remain recognizable as a human being. Equally, the Stewart of "Vertigo" reminds us of the depths into which even so pleasant a being can tumble. That is why the Stewarts of this world are complemented, not contradicted, by the Mitchums; we need them in the way that devotees of Emerson need to sneak off into a quiet corner and read Raymond Chandler. What rears up out of the past makes life, if anything, a little more wonderful.

—ANTHONY LANE

THE BENCH

There's one New Yorker who thinks Vincent the Chin really is crazy.

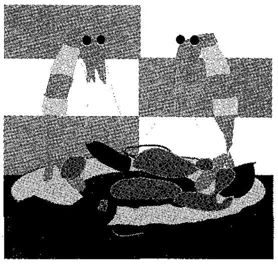


DR. WILFRED G. VAN GORP is not the kind of neuropsychologist who makes waves. When the forty-year-old doctor showed up at the trial of Vincent (the Chin) Gigante a couple of weeks ago, wearing a dark suit, he looked more like a backroom F.B.I. guy than like an expert witness for the defense. And when the judge discounted his opinion and decided that Gigante was fit to stand trial after all, van Gorp did not break any heads. He is in no rush to argue about the mental health of Vinny the Chin with the average New Yorker, who will gladly explain that when the alleged Genovese-family crime boss takes a stroll in the Village in his bathrobe he's doing it not for his health but to avoid being locked up. "I was very skeptical, given everything that I had heard," van Gorp recalled the other day while sitting in his office on the twenty-third floor of New York Hospital, overlooking the East River—a traditional resting place for people who get involved in Mob trials and testify the wrong way. A colleague of the Doctor's summed up the stakes in an E-mail that van Gorp received just after his appearance on the stand: "I guess by now you either have a new Cadillac or you are in the trunk of one."

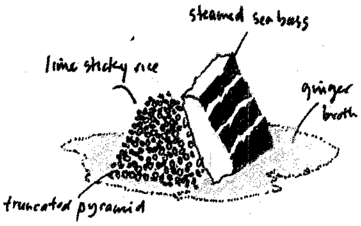
As it happens, van Gorp is an authority on malingerers, which is what neuropsychologists call people who fake illness, and his reluctant involvement with the Gigante trial began when he delivered a speech on malingering at a conference on law and psychiatry in New

ARCHITECTURAL DIGESTION

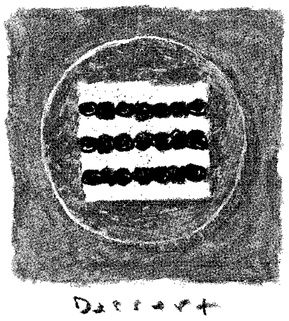
For the last few years, New York restaurant patrons have struggled with how to dismantle the intricate "architectural" creations on their dinner plates, and now architects have taken their revenge. Several prominent architects have manned the kitchen recently at the bistro the Kiosk for a series of dinners benefitting the Enterprise Foundation. On the menu for fall: the secret recipes of writers Susan Minot, Spalding Gray, and A. M. Homes.



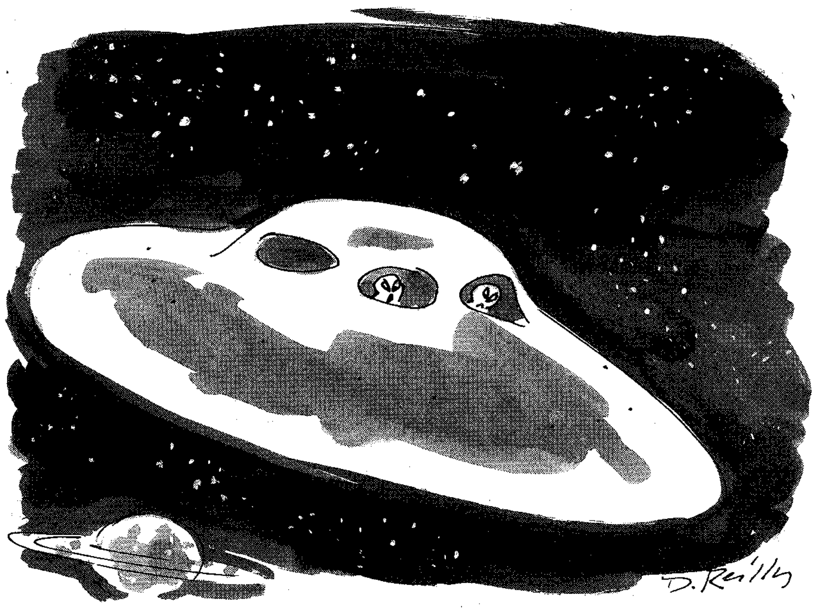
Classical Vernacular: Walter Chatham's grilled prawns with curried rice, bok choy, and mango-cilantro purée.



Minimalism: Tod Williams and Billie Tsien's steamed bass with lime-scented sticky rice.



Late-Modern Sleek: Cesar Pelli's angel-food cake with fresh berry compotes.



"You haven't taken me one damn place since that quickie trip to New Mexico back in '47."

York last February. After the speech, an associate of the Gigante defense team asked van Gorp if he'd ever encountered a patient who started out feigning craziness and subsequently developed real mental problems. "A history of malingering is no special protection against subsequent brain damage," van Gorp replied. A few months later, he found himself in an apartment on the Upper East Side with the trembling reputed Mob boss, whom he put through an eight-hour battery of psychological tests. According to van Gorp, Gigante performed poorly, prompting the Doctor to diagnose "a textbook case" of dementia, which he says may be the result of heart disease. "Mr. Gigante seemed to be concentrating and trying his best," van Gorp said politely.

Skeptics will be interested to know that van Gorp's tests are rigged against cheaters. "I don't want to give away too many trade secrets," the Doctor said, "but on this test malingerers tend to score *less* than fifty per cent, and even if you're severely incapacitated you get fifty per cent right." And lest anyone think that Vinny the Chin might have crammed for the session by studying test-taking strategies developed by Mob neuropsychologists in secret labs out in Jersey, van Gorp points out that during a memory test Gigante was attached to a positron-emission-tomography scanner, and at times when malingerers' brains tend to show increased positron activity Gigante's brain showed very little activity at all.

The Gigante defense paid van Gorp a standard fee of two thousand dollars, which went not to a Cadillac salesroom but to the Cornell University Medical College, where van Gorp is on the staff. "The judge was very complimentary," the Doctor recalled. "And he specifically said that he did not think the defense witnesses had been bought." Judging from I.Q. tests that Gigante has taken over the years, van Gorp guesses that the old man may have been faking at one time—in the nineteen-seventies, Gigante had the kind of astonishingly low I.Q. that raises the eyebrows of forensic psychologists—but that he's not faking anymore. "It looks like an example of crying wolf," van Gorp said. "You cry wolf for a long time, and then suddenly the real wolf is there at the door." —Robert Sullivan

HISTORICAL COINCIDENCE DEPT.

Progress on the march at the New York Times: no beer!

Let the record reflect that at midnight on June 30, 1997—at the same instant (though a few times zones delayed) that the British government relinquished control of Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China—the New York Times Company relinquished its license to sell beer. To put this not exactly watershed development into perspective:

The *Times* was founded in 1851. Eighty-six years later—still smarting, no doubt, at having begun publication ten years too late to report the colonization of Hong Kong—the newspaper's corporate parent applied for and received from the New York State Liquor Authority a license to sell beer. This endeavor required a considerable amount of documentation, including background checks and the fingerprinting of the half a dozen or so corporate officers who would be held accountable for any abuses. The license, which had to be renewed every three years, permitted the sale of beer in a quasi-public employee cafeteria as well as the wholesale purchase of beer for the executive dining room. After Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, Sr., became the chairman and chief executive officer of the Times Company, in 1963, a strategic decision evidently was made to spare him the inconvenience of inky digits. The principals listed on the recently expired license, five vice-presidents and an assistant controller, are familiar only to their colleagues, neighbors, and loved ones.

At some point during the nineteen-seventies (no one at the *Times* can recall precisely when), the cafeteria stopped selling beer. In retrospect, it would seem that the organizational mandate to produce a snappier, more readable *Times* was accompanied, in inverse proportion, by a general drift toward sobriety among the workforce. Ever since, the triennial renewal of the beer license has been a function of inertia, an unnecessary and unrewarding exercise—a lot like, say, reading the Sunday wedding announcements—that, this time around, would have cost the company eight hundred dollars. The perspicacity of an astute but anonymous member of the paper's legal department led to the decision to let the beer license lapse, which it officially did last Tuesday, a few hours after vehicles bearing thousands of members of the Chinese Army rolled across the border from Shenzhen. The *Times* reported that the British valediction included a banquet attended by four thousand guests who dined on "Scottish salmon, stuffed chicken breast and a red fruit pudding with raspberry sauce." No mention of what they washed it down with. —Mark Singer

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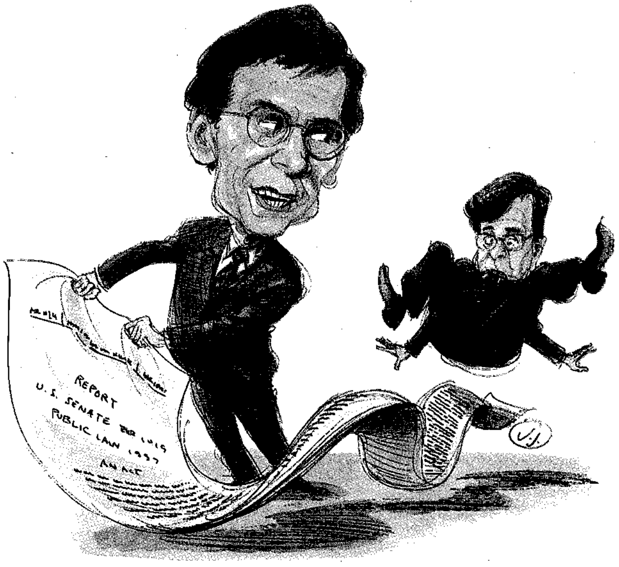
LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

THE CLINTONIZER

How Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle became the President's secret weapon.

BY JOE KLEIN

On the morning of June 25th, in the midst of the first truly busy week of what had been a sullen, somnolent congressional season, Tom Daschle, of South Dakota, the leader of the Senate Democrats, introduced a tax-cutting plan that he immediately acknowledged had no hope of passage. He did this as he does almost everything: calmly, reasonably, and without a hint of irony or eloquence. Standing in a favorite Senate Democrat haunt—the elegant, frescoed Lyndon B. Johnson Room in the Capitol—and using the requisite post-Perot charts and graphs, he showed how the Democrats' proposal would channel more benefits toward the middle class and away from the very wealthy than the Republicans' tax cut would. "We're in the minority; we know that," he said. "But it's important to let the American people know what the Democrats might have done if we were in the majority."



Daschle delivered an important Presidential message on tax-cutting—one that spooked Trent Lott's Republicans.

VICTOR JUHASZ

There was, however, a more pragmatic purpose behind Daschle's performance: to let the Republicans know what Bill Clinton might do if their tax cut arrived at the White House in its present form. Questioned by reporters afterward, Daschle happily admitted that his plan had the President's approval—that, indeed, it had been constructed with the Administration's assistance—and that, while he couldn't say for sure which, if any, of the Republicans' proposals might cause Clinton to veto their plan, "I have no doubt that the President will speak out and he'll be as specific publicly as he's been, privately, with me."

The Daschle bill was defeated the next day, sixty-one to thirty-eight. But it was a beguiling vote: in the stately, easily clogged Senate, the support of thirty-four members can sustain a Presidential veto; and, perhaps more to the point, forty-one dissidents can prevent a measure from ever reaching a vote, under the so-called cloture rule. There was little doubt that Daschle had three more Democrats—members of the Finance Committee—ready to vote against aspects of the Republicans' plan in the future, if it became necessary. And so an important Presidential message had been delivered: the Republicans would have to modify their tax-cutting or face another potentially embarrassing confrontation with Bill Clinton. The White House was delighted. "This was very helpful," said John Hilley, the President's director of legislative affairs (and a former Daschle aide). "It gives us leverage. There's no doubt we'll eventually get a bill we'll be very happy with."

The Republicans, meanwhile, were spooked. "I think it's fair to say our members are very wary," said a person close to Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott. "Most of them think there's an eighty-

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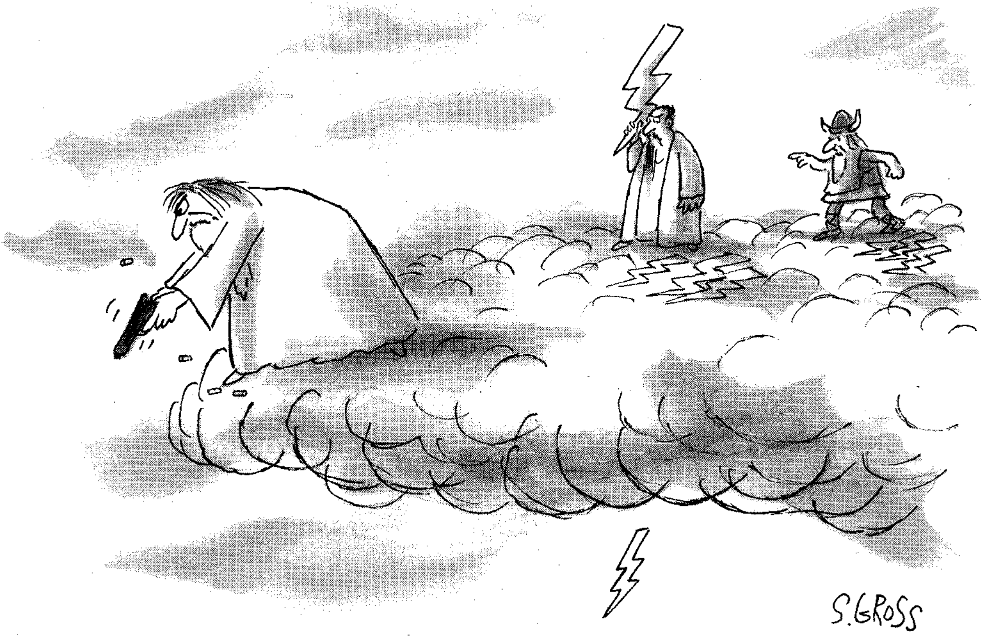

"The National Rifle Association maintains a very powerful lobby up here."

per-cent chance that Clinton will veto the tax cut." In normal times, that might be a delicious prospect for Republicans, the fodder of grand propaganda: a Democratic President who seems to oppose the reduction of taxes has almost Jungian resonance in the conservative collective consciousness. But ever since the government shutdown of 1995 the Republican congressional majority has grown skittish whenever a battle with the White House has loomed. For the past three years, Bill Clinton has been very successful in choosing his legislative fights—perhaps because Tom Daschle has helped him do it. In a less than overpowering Presidency, this has been a stunning bit of intimidation. "When these situations arise," Presidential assistant Rahm Emmanuel says, "the President's first question is 'What does Tom think?' "

Often, the battles have been over tiny provisions of complicated bills, and they have gone unnoticed by the general public; sometimes, as on welfare reform, the President and the Senate Minority Leader have counted heads and decided to forgo a major confrontation (even though Daschle personally voted against that bill, as he did against the balanced-budget deal). As a result, Clinton has been able to share credit for the passage of such traditionally conservative initiatives, while the Republicans have stood naked in defeat. This spring, they embarrassed themselves again by attempting to attach some extraneous provisions to a flood-relief bill for the Dakotas and Minnesota. Clinton vetoed the bill, Daschle held the Senate Democrats firm, and, when it became clear that the public was siding with the President, the Republicans quickly gave him the bill he wanted. That precedent was very much on Trent Lott's mind at the start of the maneuvering over the tax cut. On the day Daschle submitted his doomed alternative, the *Wall Street Journal* reported a poll that showed the public to be substantially in favor of the President's position—for tax cuts, but not for reductions skewed toward the wealthy. That evening, Daschle savored his defeat with the slightest of smiles in his Capitol office, which is adorned—colorfully, if inevitably—with Sioux artifacts. "I don't know that I would characterize the Republicans as spooked," he said, "but we succeeded in getting our message across today, and that's what this was all about."

THIS was to have been Trent Lott's year. After the wretched excesses of the Republican revolution, the Thermidorian Senate leader was expected to supplant his Jacobin counterparts in the House and join the President in leading a placid, bipartisan interregnum. From a distance, it might appear that events have proceeded as planned: a bipartisan balanced-budget agreement was reached; a bipartisan tax-cut plan undoubtedly will be; and Lott led his recalcitrant troops into ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention. But this has not been a happy time for Republicans. The House leadership nears chaos, with not so secret cabals and muffled fulminations—from top deputies and former acolytes—threatening to further undermine Newt Gingrich's diminished authority. The situation isn't nearly so dire in the Senate, but Lott has seemed surprisingly unsteady—faltering on the disaster-relief bill, defending Air Force First Lieutenant Kelly Flinn (to the chagrin of military purists and other conservatives), clumsily lambasting the President as "a spoiled brat" and then quickly retreating. "Lott's a political technician, not a visionary," says William Kristol, the publisher of the conservative *Weekly Standard*, which has become a constant source of annoyance to the Republican leaders, criticizing them as clueless, passive, and jittery. "If he's at all effective, it's only in a context where everyone has been Clintonized."

In an era of unambitious governance, Tom Daschle probably has the best job in town: the Constitution has given the Senate Minority Leader a great deal of power and not much responsibility. If he can assemble forty-one votes, he can block anything. Senators, however, tend not to be easily assembled. "The Senate is one hundred bad habits," says Byron Dorgan, Democrat of North Dakota, who is a close Daschle associate. "Tom's achievement shouldn't be underestimated."

In his three years as Minority Leader, Daschle has never failed to get forty-one votes to block the Republicans when he's decided to make the effort to do so. His success has come as a surprise to most of his colleagues. The Senator from South Dakota was a controversial choice to succeed George Mitchell, of Maine, who retired in 1994. At forty-seven, Daschle was considered too young, too mild, and perhaps too weak. The old bulls of the Party persuaded Senator Christopher Dodd, of Connecticut, a more dynamic and blustery fellow, to run against him. But Daschle beat Dodd by one vote. The victory was attributed to Daschle's strong personal relationships with his colleagues, especially Midwesterners. George

Stephanopoulos says, "It turned out that beneath the 'Leave It to Beaver' exterior was a little bit of Machiavelli."

IN a legislative body famous for preening, self-infatuated presences, Daschle remains relentlessly low key. He was born in Aberdeen, South Dakota. His family was not at all political. His father was a bookkeeper at, and later a part owner of, an auto-parts company. "When I was very young, I was introverted and afraid of heights, so I decided to confront my fears by standing on ladders and practicing being friendly with people," the Senator says. "Eventually, I became a pilot and a politician." He graduated from South Dakota State University and then served a noncombat Vietnam-era hitch in the Air Force. In 1973, he joined the staff of James Abourezk, a charming South Dakotan iconoclast who was then serving in the Senate. Abourezk remembers the precise moment when he realized that Daschle had a political future: "I was getting my ass chewed out by a bunch of American Legionnaires about Vietnam and had to go out on the floor for a vote," he says. "So I had Tom babysit them, and when I came back they were eating out of his hand. I told him he should think about running for office."

Daschle won his first race for the House, in 1978, by a margin of fourteen votes over a former Vietnam prisoner of war named Leo Thorsness. He was elected to the Senate in 1986. He seemed a standard-issue Midwestern liberal, addicted to agriculture subsidies—and perhaps best known for his proximity to George Mitchell. "People thought of him as Mitchell's water boy," one senator says. "It was hard for the older guys to see the strength."

Daschle took charge of the Senate Democrats at a desperate moment, after the Party's electoral wipeout of 1994, when the Republicans took control of the Congress. "My first job," he says, "was to call every colleague and tell them which committee assignments they were losing." He acknowledges that his style did not inspire confidence, particularly in comparison with the distant, imperious leadership of George Mitchell. A staff member observes, "Mitchell would come to the caucus and say, 'Here's what we're going to do.' Daschle comes to the caucus and asks, 'What do you think we should do?' He listens to those guys to the point of exhaustion and then gently steers them where he wants to go."

The Senate Democrats soon began to notice their new leader's judiciousness. A turning point came in the summer of 1995, when Daschle blocked Bob Dole's regulatory-reform bill. "Everyone just assumed it would pass," says Ron Klain, who is now chief of staff to Vice-President Gore but was a Daschle lieutenant at the time. "It was the sort of bill where you usually lose Democrats to the business interests, but Daschle held the caucus together"—again, it came down to a single vote—"and, more important, he found a minor provision about reduced meat inspections and used it as the most accessible way to sell the public on our position. It became 'the bad-meat bill.' "

A string of victories—or, at least, non-defeats—ensued. Unlike the House Democratic leader, Richard Gephardt, who has broken dramatically with the White House on such major issues as welfare reform, the balanced-budget deal, and trade with China and Mexico, Daschle has remained close to the President, even when he has disagreed with him. "He has been the President's strength in the Senate," Clinton's adviser John Hilley says.

And the President's strength in the Senate has emerged as the defining political weapon in this oddly shrivelled federal environment. Someone familiar with the Majority Leader's current thinking says, "Senator Lott has learned to be highly respectful of how they"—the President and Daschle—"can turn a debate to their advantage in the media. He's been chagrined by his own inability to do it."

The counting of noses and the winning of votes is one of the more elusive political arts. It happens one on one, in private. It requires skills too subtle for most politicians—notably, the divining of individual temperaments, as opposed to the harvesting of vast public moods. "I don't know if leaders ever really twisted arms," says Christopher Dodd, who seems relieved to have lost his struggle against Daschle three years ago. "But you certainly can't get away with browbeating people now. Tom has a way of letting you know when a vote is important, without making you feel guilty. You find yourself trying to help him out. I'd like to think I would have done a good job as leader, but, boy, Tom certainly does have a talent for this." ♦

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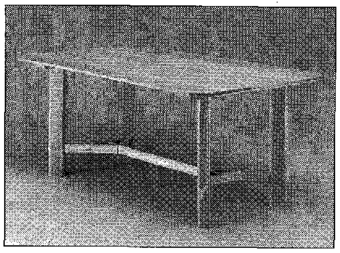

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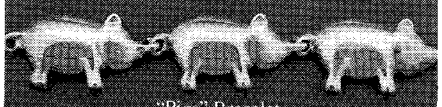

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THE CULTURE INDUSTRY

THE ORIGIN OF ALIEN SPECIES

There are precisely six types of space creatures out there—and it's all on film.

BY KURT ANDERSEN

DURING the past several years, evolutionary biologists have proved that the disparate creatures of our planet are, at a fundamental genetic level, very similar to one another. The genes that differentiate the top and the bottom of a bug, for instance, are the same ones that differentiate our fronts from our backs. According to the paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould, this new understanding is among "the most stunning evolutionary discoveries of the decade," and is clearly "a dominant theme in evolution."

The same law applies, it appears, to the extraterrestrial creatures that come out of Hollywood. As is true of biological evolution, the evolution of movie aliens is constrained by a limited range of modes and materials: skeletons are aluminum, steel, or fibreglass; skins are foam rubber, polyurethane, silicone, or gels. In the evolutionary pseudobiology of the cinema, memes, rather than genes, circumscribe the forms that a new alien creature can take. "The process of designing aliens always takes you back to variations on a theme," Laurie MacDonald, the coproducer of the new film "Men in Black," told me. "They all look similar." There may be more than one way to skin an extraterrestrial, in other words, but not a lot more.

Is the current alien mania in films ("Men in Black," "The Fifth Element," "Contact"), on television ("The X-Files," "3rd Rock from the Sun"), and in the news (Heaven's Gate, Roswell reminiscences) some kooky by-product of the end of the Cold War? Or can it be an epiphenomenon of the turn of the millennium? That's what commentators have been asking lately. Perhaps the more interesting question is: Why are so many of the new movie aliens so . . . gooey? A preliminary taxonomy indicates that Hollywood aliens may be classified into six distinct phyla.

Type One, *more or less normal-looking people*, includes most aliens in episodic network television, from the original "Star Trek" to "3rd Rock from the Sun." A subcategory is the alien lollapalooza, usually a blonde: Zsa Zsa Gabor in "The Queen of Outer Space" (1958), say, or Natasha Henstridge, the star of "Species" (1995). In many instances, of course, aliens assume human form only in order to charm Earthlings (as in the forthcoming Jodie Foster movie, "Contact") or to keep below-the-line production costs under control.

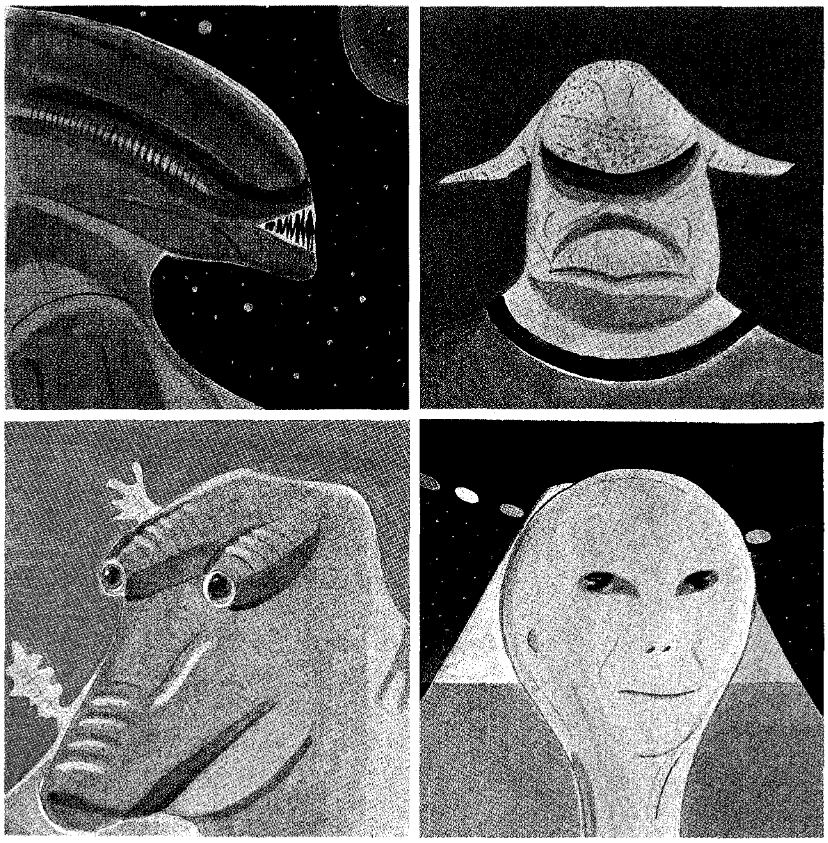
Type Two consists of *hulking humanoids with enormous bald heads*, which are (a) anatomically expressionist, (b) faux leprous, or (c) shaped like a chef's toque. Originally a product of suspicious nineteen-fifties anti-intellectualism—giant skull equals genius equals Communist—Type Twos include the (balding) Klingons and Ferengi from "Star Trek," the diva in "The Fifth Element," and, in overtly parodic mode, the Coneheads and the exposed-brain aliens in "Mars Attacks" (1996).

Type Three, which has emerged only during the past few decades, is the modern classic: *the small, gray, hairless, chinless, big-eyed waif*, resembling the woman from Munch's "The Scream" on antidepressants or a member of a children's mime group. These wan, innocent, naked creatures appeared during the Woodstock era and after—and, tellingly, supplanted the scheming, sinister, aggressively superhuman aliens typical of the anti-Communist fifties. The definitive portrayal appeared in Steven Spielberg's "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" (1977), but those aliens surely bear some cinemagenetic relation to the space fetus at the end of "2001" (1967) and to the aliens in "The X-Files," even down to the portentous backlighting.

As it happens, the great majority of "real" aliens today are also Type Threes, including the ones who abducted Whitley Streiber in his book "Communion: A True Story," and the ones who performed experiments on the abductees treated by the Harvard Medical School professor John Mack during the past decade. Is it unfair to assume that suggestible people began seeing Spielbergian aliens in real life during the eighties as a result of having seen the aliens in "Close Encounters" during the late seventies? No more unfair than to assume that it was only after McCaulay Culkin pumped his arm triumphantly and said "Yesss!" in "Home Alone" (1990) that millions of American eleven-year-olds acquired the habit of pumping an arm triumphantly and saying "Yesss!"

Hollywood Extraterrestrial Type Four is *the comic-relief plush toy*. The tiny, furry tribbles in the original "Star Trek" series may have been the first appearance of this type. Other instances include the title character in "Alf" and most of the memorable secondary characters in "Star Wars," such as Chewbacca and the Ewoks. A prominent Type Four subgroup is the evil, rotund comic-relief plush toy, such as the creatures in "Gremlins" (1984) and the churlish bovine/porcine warriors in both "Return of the Jedi" and "The Fifth Element." It seems no accident that Type Four aliens, clownish but winning, achieved their peak of popularity at the very moment we were giving a landslide reëlection to Ronald Reagan, our clownish but winning plush-toy President.

Type Five is *the swamp creature*—reptiles and amphibians who walk upright. This was a standard form of the fifties, and reëmerged with a vengeance, like just about every other fifties cultural artifact, during the eighties. The nicer aliens of this type are apt to be more amphibian than reptilian. The major examples—E.T. (1982) and Yoda (1983)—both arguably have strains of Type Three (big eyes) and Type Four (tactile, seriocomic cuteness) as well. The evolutionary semiotics seem straightforward: frogs and turtles are homely but cute and unthreatening. Conversely, snakes and lizards are scary, so reptilian extraterrestrials are bad, notable recent examples being the reptilian queen alien in "Aliens" (1986) and the man-killing lizard girl Sil in "Species." Sil and the creatures in the original, 1979 “Alien” were designed by the Swiss artist H. R. Giger, but the director and creature designer of its sequel “Aliens” were James Cameron and Stan Winston, respectively. “Jim Cameron had the concept that there would be a queen,” Winston told me. “He’d done a painting of her. The big change from that first concept was an added joint to the leg that gave her feet the look of high-heeled shoes. This was a queen. This was a bitch.” Antifeminist backlash as a Hollywood-alien design parameter seems not to have caught on, but the lizardy, slightly buglike “Aliens” queen undoubtedly led to the lizardy, slightly buglike “Independence Day” (1996) extraterrestrials and to the lizardy aliens in Robin Cook’s novel and TV miniseries “Invasion.” (Some ostensible real-life abductees, according to C. D. B. Bryan’s 1995 book “Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind,” have reported experiences with menacing, six-to-eight-foot-tall reptilian aliens.)



GEOFFREY PARKER

Hollywood Extraterrestrial Type Six consists of hypertrophied arthropods, or, in lay terms, *really, really big shellfish and insects.* Again, as with the reptilian aliens they sometimes resemble, the genesis seems clear: bugs are gross. The title character in “Predator” (1987) was a hybrid that Stan Winston, its creator, describes as a “Rastafarian insectoid-humanoid alien.” The movie’s producer, Joel Silver, suggested the Rasta notion, and James Cameron, who wasn’t even working on the picture, inspired the rest. “Jim and I were on a flight to Japan to speak at a symposium on creatures in movies,” Winston told me. “I remember drawing my first sketches on the plane, and he looked over my shoulder and said, ‘I’d like to see a creature with mandibles.’ ” Today, a decade later, giant alien insects are everywhere, threatening to destroy mankind not only in “Men in Black” (a twelve-foot-tall neo-cockroach) but in next fall’s “Starship Troopers” (hordes of ten-foot-tall grasshoppers). An emerging alien metatype that blurs the categories is the morphing extraterrestrial, the creature who visibly changes on-screen from human being to bug or bug to lizard. The morphing extraterrestrial is almost wholly a function of technology—in this case, computer-generated imagery. The other unmistakable trend in aliens is of a piece with gross-out explicitness in pop culture generally. Extraterrestrials today tend to be *wet,* the glycerine sheen variously suggesting evisceration, birth, mucus, dangerous bodily fluids, otherworldly goo. “Slime?” Stan Winston said when I asked if he thought he had helped usher in the current Wet Era with his work on “Aliens.” “I would say yes, there is something visceral that comes from seeing drool—maybe you relate it to a rabid animal.”

“Men in Black,” which posits Earth as an intergalactic Switzerland (and Earthlings like Elvis Presley as incognito extraterrestrials in exile), represents an alien-morphology apotheosis. For the first time in the history of film, every one of the six main alien types is represented. And the movie is full of alien goo. Indeed, “Men in Black” doesn’t seem to *want* its extraterrestrials to look too original: it intends to be familiar in a hep “Nick at Night” fashion, and assembles a pastiche of extraterrestrial archetypes to do its postmodern business.

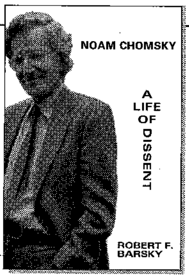
Laurie MacDonald coproduced the film with her husband, Walter Parkes. “We always knew Edgar was going to be a bug,” Parkes told me, speaking about their main alien villain.

“The first design looked too much like our house cat,” MacDonald recalled.

“We moved it scarier,” Parkes said. They also moved it away from the design of the “Independence Day” aliens. “When we heard that their main alien was going to be a lot like ours, there was some substantial redesigning of Edgar,” he explained. “If you look at Edgar now, he has that protruding jaw and those enormous teeth. But we didn’t want to go too far into the territory of ‘Alien.’ ”

Stan Winston’s aliens have been more imitated than imitative, but even he admitted, “It’s impossible not to be influenced by things you have experienced in the past.” His other major conclusion about creating movie aliens is that the creatures have to be able to express feelings. “You must relate to it with something you can relate emotion to.”

“Human form is an interesting issue in this,” Walter Parkes said about the challenge of designing aliens for “Men in Black.” “On the one hand, you want to be able to relate to these creatures, so you want some semblance of human form. But you don’t want the audience to say, ‘It’s just a man in a suit.’ ” Steven Spielberg, as the film’s executive producer, also helped decide how the aliens in “Men in Black” would look. “Steven’s main note,” Parkes told me, “tended to be that the alien faces should somewhere and somehow reflect human structure.” He paused. “And that’s because, of course, he’s an alien himself.” ♦



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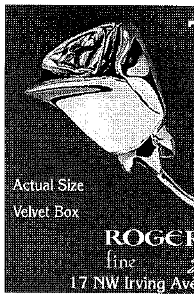

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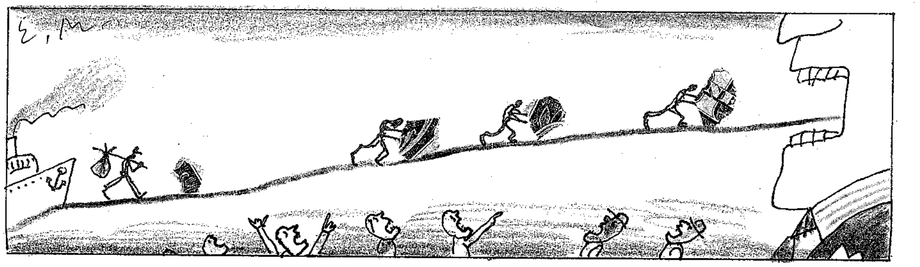
DEPT. OF DISPUTATION

THE MELTING-POT MYTH

Immigration made America. Could it unmake it, too?

BY JOHN CASSIDY



WHEN people talk about immigration, the conversation quickly becomes overheated—and no wonder. The topic taps into political agendas that have nothing to do with the practical policy question of how America's borders ought to be controlled. Among mainstream conservatives, being pro-immigration is an easy way to establish one's free-market credentials, but it also provides ample opportunities for making invidious comparisons between allegedly industrious immigrants and allegedly lazy African-Americans. Social conservatives like Pat Buchanan use the anti-immigration card to attack multiculturalism, inflame nativist prejudice, and win over Reagan Democrats. For most liberals, supporting an open immigration policy is a way to celebrate the image of America as a gorgeous mosaic, but some radicals see immigration as a fiendish plot that facilitates sweatshops, wage cuts, and assorted other evils of multinational capitalism. The immigration debate has become a surrogate for arguments about everything from eugenics to welfare reform to economic growth.

The one thing the debate has been short on is facts, but that is no longer the case. A few weeks ago, the National Academy of Sciences, a nonprofit organization of distinguished scholars, published a four-hundred-page report, which concluded that "immigration benefits the U.S. economy overall and has little negative effect on the income and job opportunities of most native-born Americans." The press reported these findings prominently, and Jim Smith, a Rand-corporation economist who chaired the panel of academics that produced the report, said in a statement, "Immigrants may be adding as much as ten billion dollars to the economy each year." If the report's conclusions are accepted at face value, the only remaining question is whether the United States should admit even more immigrants than the eight hundred thousand or so who are arriving each year, and when I spoke to Smith recently he suggested as much. "If you want ten times bigger gains, let in ten times as many immigrants," he said.

Things might not be quite that simple, though. "Over all, the National Academy report is not as favorable as the press made it out to be," George Borjas, a Harvard economist who was one of its authors, told me. "I'm sort of stunned by the way it was spun. The big news, which was not a headline in the New York *Times*, was that there is a growing consensus among economists that the gains from immigration are small." Borjas is not the only panel member who thinks that the media missed the real news. "For roughly twenty to twenty-five years, immigrants are a net fiscal drain on our society," Richard Freeman, another Harvard professor, said. "That finding came as a total shock to me. Immigrants come in. They have kids. The kids use our schools, they use our medical system, and that's expensive."

Smith denied that any attempt had been made to "spin" the report's findings, but the Harvard professors have a point. Immigration is a growth area in economics, and the new research suggests that native residents gain far less from immigration than was once thought, and that some natives—particularly unskilled workers and taxpayers in high-immigration areas—pay a high price for the arrival of so many foreigners. Moreover, immigration may be affecting internal-migration patterns in ways that undermine the notion of a melting pot and could leave the country as two separate stews: one young, bubbly, and multicultural; the other older, whiter, and more resentful. To this immigrant, at least, these are worrisome findings.

THE basic facts are not in doubt. In 1996, there were more than twenty-four million legal immigrants in the United States (nobody really knows how many illegal immigrants there are), and they made up 9.3 per cent of the population. If current trends persist, some forty-five million more immigrants will have arrived by 2050, and post-1970 immigrants and their descendants will then make up about a third of the population.

Immigration policy is regulated by the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. This legislation replaced the old quota system, which was biased toward immigrants from European countries, with a system favoring family members of people already in the United States, and it had dramatic (and largely unintended) effects. In the nineteen-fifties, of the two hundred and fifty thousand legal immigrants who entered the United States each year, their top three countries of origin were Germany, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Today, of the roughly eight hundred thousand legal immigrants entering the country each year, more than half come from seven developing countries: Mexico, the Philippines, Vietnam, the Dominican Republic, mainland China and Taiwan, Korea, and India. This shift is already altering the country's racial makeup. In 1995, the American population was seventy-four per cent white, twelve per cent black, ten per cent Hispanic, and three per cent Asian. In 2050, according to the Academy's study, it will be fifty-one per cent white, fourteen per cent black, twenty-six per cent Hispanic, and eight per cent Asian.

As the number of immigrants has risen, their skill levels, relative to native workers', have fallen sharply. In 1970, immigrants and natives had comparable high-school dropout rates; today, male natives are two and a half times as likely to have finished high school as immigrants are. (Of course, some immigrants are highly educated. Ten per cent of them have advanced degrees, compared with only seven per cent of natives.)

It seems intuitively obvious that the arrival of so many people looking for work would put downward pressure on wages—at least, in high-immigration areas—but this doesn't seem to be the case on the local level. In one renowned study David Card, a former Princeton economist, tracked the impact of the 1980 Mariel boatlift, during which a hundred and twenty-five thousand Cubans, most of them unskilled, landed in Miami. This influx raised Miami's labor force by seven per cent, but Card found that it had virtually no impact on the wages or the employment rates of the city's native unskilled workers relative to those of residents of other cities. "There may be some downward pressure on wages, but it's very difficult to see it at a local level," he told me not long ago.

Card's findings implied that the economic costs of immigration are minimal, but this conclusion has recently been challenged, most notably by Borjas, Freeman, and Larry Katz, a third Harvard economist. They argue that studying the impact of immigration at the local level is misleading, because native workers respond to immigration either by moving out of high-immigration areas or by not moving into them. If this is so, immigration affects the labor supply throughout the country and that is the level at which the issue should be studied.

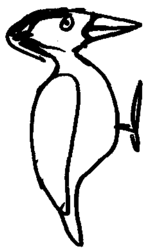
William Frey, a demographer at the University of Michigan, has provided the strongest evidence in favor of this hypothesis. A few years ago, while Frey was studying data from the 1990 census he noticed an anomaly. "I looked at domestic migration"—movement between states—"and said, 'Boy, this is really strange stuff. You've got out-migration rates among people with a high-school education or less that are greater than the rate for college graduates,' " he recalled recently. Internal migration can usually be characterized as the circulation of élites—management consultants tend to move around more than firefighters—but Frey discovered that in areas with a high number of unskilled immigrants this was no longer true. In California between 1990 and 1994, 7.2 per cent of high-school graduates left the state, compared with just three per cent of college graduates. "It's not just California and New York, although those are two big cases. It's Texas, Miami, Chicago, even Washington, D.C.," Frey went on. "I can't say that all of it is displacement, but I do know that it's associated with immigration."

Frey's findings suggest that when Mexican dressmakers arrive in San Diego they may indirectly affect the wages of seamstresses in Denver and Seattle. Borjas, Freeman, and Katz came up with a way to measure this nationwide impact, and their findings are detailed in a paper soon to be published by the Brookings Institution. They found that immigration doesn't much affect native workers who have completed at least a high-school education—a category that includes six out of seven Americans—because the number of well-educated immigrants is still small relative to the number of well-educated natives. However, immigration does have a major impact on some twenty million native high-school dropouts who are competing with unskilled immigrants. Between 1979 and 1995, the average hourly wage of American males who hadn't finished high school fell from $12.22 to $8.92 (in constant 1995 dollars)—an unprecedented slide of almost thirty per cent. High-school graduates also saw their earnings slip in this period, but the wage cuts endured by high-school dropouts were much larger, and Borjas, Freeman, and Katz have calculated that between forty-four per cent and sixty per cent of this drop in relative earnings can be attributed to immigration. "Low-paid workers are the big losers," Freeman told me.

WHEN David Card moved to San Francisco recently, he noticed some changes from his life style in Princeton. "In California, a professor has at least a gardener and maybe two, someone who cleans his house, and two or three day-care workers," he said. Most such domestic workers are immigrants. In the six states where immigration is highest

(California, New York, Texas, New Jersey, Florida, and Illinois), seventy-eight per cent of the male cooks and sixty-two per cent of the female housekeepers are immigrants. These numbers suggest that the natives who benefit most from immigration are the ones who purchase the services of cooks, housekeepers, and gardeners on a regular basis, which is to say the rich. This conclusion was confirmed by the Academy's experts. "Benefits from lower prices are higher for households with very high levels of wealth and education," the report noted.

The fact that immigration hurts the poor and benefits the rich doesn't necessarily make it a bad thing. To decide whether this is a worthwhile trade-off, we need to know how significant the net benefits from immigration are, and a number of other recent studies have tried to answer that question. Most of them estimate the net gains to native households from immigration at between one billion and ten billion dollars a year. (These figures are calculated by adding up the total benefits to consumers and employers from lower prices and subtracting the total losses to workers from lower wages.) The difference between one billion dollars and ten billion dollars may seem like a lot, but relative to the size of the economy—the gross domestic product is about to pass eight trillion dollars—it isn't. From an economic perspective, the important thing about both of these numbers is that they are relatively small; for example, the annual budget of New York City is $33.4 billion, and the annual interest on the national debt is almost two hundred and fifty billion dollars.



PERHAPS the most controversial issue in the immigration debate is whether the provision of government services to immigrants should be limited. This is what happened in California after the passage of Proposition 187, in 1994, and is now happening throughout the country following last year's welfare-reform bill. In two immensely valuable chapters, the Academy's report details the fiscal impact that immigrants have at the local, state, and national levels over the short term and the long term.

The first message to emerge from these chapters is that Californians may be selfish but they are not stupid. According to the report, a typical native-Californian household pays $1,178 more in state and local taxes than it receives in state and locally funded government services, and this money is used to finance a net transfer to immigrants of $3,463 per immigrant household. (When federal taxes and spending are included, the net contribution from native households falls, but by only four dollars.)

On the national level, the figures are less dramatic, but they go in the same direction. A typical immigrant family receives net transfers from the government worth between $1,613 and $2,206. When the fiscal burden of providing these sums to nine million immigrant households is divided equally among eighty-nine million native households, the annual cost comes out to between $166 and $226 for each native household. These aren't huge numbers, but they are substantially bigger than the economic "gains" from immigration which the newspapers reported. Divide ten billion dollars equally among eighty-nine million native households, and the financial gain per household comes out at $112.36. Subtract from this the annual fiscal deficit of between $166 and $226, and the typical native household is at least fifty dollars in the red.

There are three reasons that immigrant families tend to be a burden on the state: they have more children than native families (and the children of immigrants almost always use public schools); they receive more government benefits; and they pay less in taxes (because they are poorer). Two key issues are how long immigrants remain a fiscal burden and whether they eventually pay back the government benefits they receive in the years immediately following their arrival. To answer these questions, Ronald Lee, a Berkeley economist, examined the finances of thousands of immigrants and their descendants, and he found that in the long run immigrants are a good deal for the country. By the time a typical immigrant with a family dies, he and his children will have paid eighty thousand dollars more in taxes than they have received in government benefits. However, that is not the end of the story. If the children's tax contributions are not figured in, most immigrants never pay back all that they receive in government services, and even if their children's payments are included most immigrants are a fiscal burden for at least twenty-two years. "You are asking the American public to be patient, and twenty-two years is not a trivial period," Jim Smith told me.

Lee's figures also show how the age and education level of immigrants affect their economic input. An immigrant who arrives here at the age of twenty-five and has had more than a high-school education will, typically, pay about three hundred thousand dollars more in taxes than he receives in government benefits before he dies. But a high-school dropout who arrives at the same age will be a slight burden during his entire life, and if he doesn't get here until the age of forty he will cost native taxpayers about a hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

There is one more worrisome aspect of Lee's analysis. His finding that immigrants pay their way after twenty-two years in this country depends on an assumption that the federal government will raise taxes sharply on everybody, including immigrants, around the year 2016, as the baby boomers start to retire. This may be a reasonable guess, but if we assume instead that taxes remain roughly at their present level the typical immigrant will never pay back all that he has received in government benefits, even if his children's tax payments are included. Indeed, he will cost native taxpayers fifteen thousand dollars.

ONE important question that most economic studies don't address is what effect the present-day immigration patterns will have on the social and political geography of the country. The optimistic answer is that they won't have any—or, at least, won't have much. The economic dynamism and the political openness of the American system will allow the new arrivals to assimilate, just as the Irish, the Jews, and the Poles did before them. The keys to repeating this success are capitalism, which tends to blur racial distinctions in the pursuit of profit, and geographical proximity, which inevitably leads to procreation. There is nothing like sex to break down racial barriers. By 2050, according to the Academy, the number of Americans of mixed racial ancestry will have quadrupled, to eighty-one million (out of a total population projected to be three hundred and eighty-seven million), and, the report notes, "the social meaning of ethnic and racial lines will become increasingly blurred."

Let us hope so. The alternative vision is one that William Frey, the demographer who first identified the "white flight" from high-immigration areas, has described as the Balkanization of America. Between 1990 and 1996, Frey pointed out, Los Angeles and New York each lost more than a million domestic residents. In contrast, a number of nonmetropolitan areas, most of them in the Mountain states, the South Atlantic region, and the Southwest, have seen rapid rises in internal-migration rates. These are places like Elbert County, Colorado, which is 96.3 per cent white and saw its population grow by sixty per cent between 1990 and 1996; Summit County, Utah (96.6 per cent white; 45.4-per-cent population increase); and Dawson County, Georgia (98.6 per cent white; 30.8-per-cent population increase). "There are going to be two or three separate Americas—not just the city and the suburbs, which we already know are distinct, but very broad geographic regions," Frey predicted. "One America will be multicultural. It will be lively and younger, it will have more conflict, and the people there will be concerned about having more money in their schools, more Latino politicians, more Asian politicians. Another part of the country will be largely white and middle-aged: these people will be more concerned about making sure the social-security system stays intact but less concerned about affirmative action, public schools, and so forth. What I am painting are some sharp political divisions, which both parties will have to deal with."

ACCORDING to opinion polls, about two-thirds of Americans now believe that immigration should be restricted, yet support for an open-door policy is virtually a badge of respectability among the political and media élite. At the very least, the new economic research suggests that the intellectual case for immigration needs bolstering.

"Do you want to get out of here and grab a cup of coffee?"

It is always possible, of course, that the economic models don't fully capture the benefits of immigration. Most of them assume that a lot of the work done by immigrants would be carried out by natives if immigrants weren't here. That is doubtless true in some occupations—New York cabs wouldn't disappear from the streets (or not for long, anyway) if all the Pakistanis and the Russians left—but it may not be true in others, such as avocado farming in California, and, if it isn't, the gains from immigration could be much larger than ten billion dollars a year. (David Card, for one, believes that the Academy's figures are misleading.)

The new research also doesn't address the indisputable fact that immigrants have revitalized depressed areas, such as parts of the South Bronx and downtown Los Angeles. The tricky question is how much natives benefit from this process. All economists agree that immigrants increase the size of the economy, but a lot of this money ends up in the pockets of the immigrants themselves. George Johnson, an economist at the University of Michigan, estimates that an influx of ten million unskilled immigrants (roughly the number of such immigrants who have arrived since 1980) raises the annual output of the economy by about $110.5 billion. Of this amount, $108.8 billion goes to the immigrants as income, leaving a net gain for the native population of just $1.7 billion. "Almost all the benefits of immigration go to the immigrants. The net gain to domestic residents is pretty trivial," Johnson says.

Johnson's figures demonstrate why economic studies alone cannot provide definite answers to the political questions surrounding immigration. Ultimately, moral judgments have to be made about how to evaluate the gains and the losses by various groups in society, but these judgments should be shaped by the economic facts. For example, one can reasonably argue that immigration is wonderful because it provides opportunities for millions of poor foreigners and makes America richer (by making the economy larger), but it is simply incorrect to argue that immigration makes all of us richer (in the sense of raising income per capita) and doesn't hurt anybody. If economics teaches us anything, it is to be suspicious of policies that seem to offer big benefits at small cost. In this sense, Milton Friedman was right when he observed that there's no such thing as a free lunch—not even if it's cooked by a Guatemalan refugee. ♦

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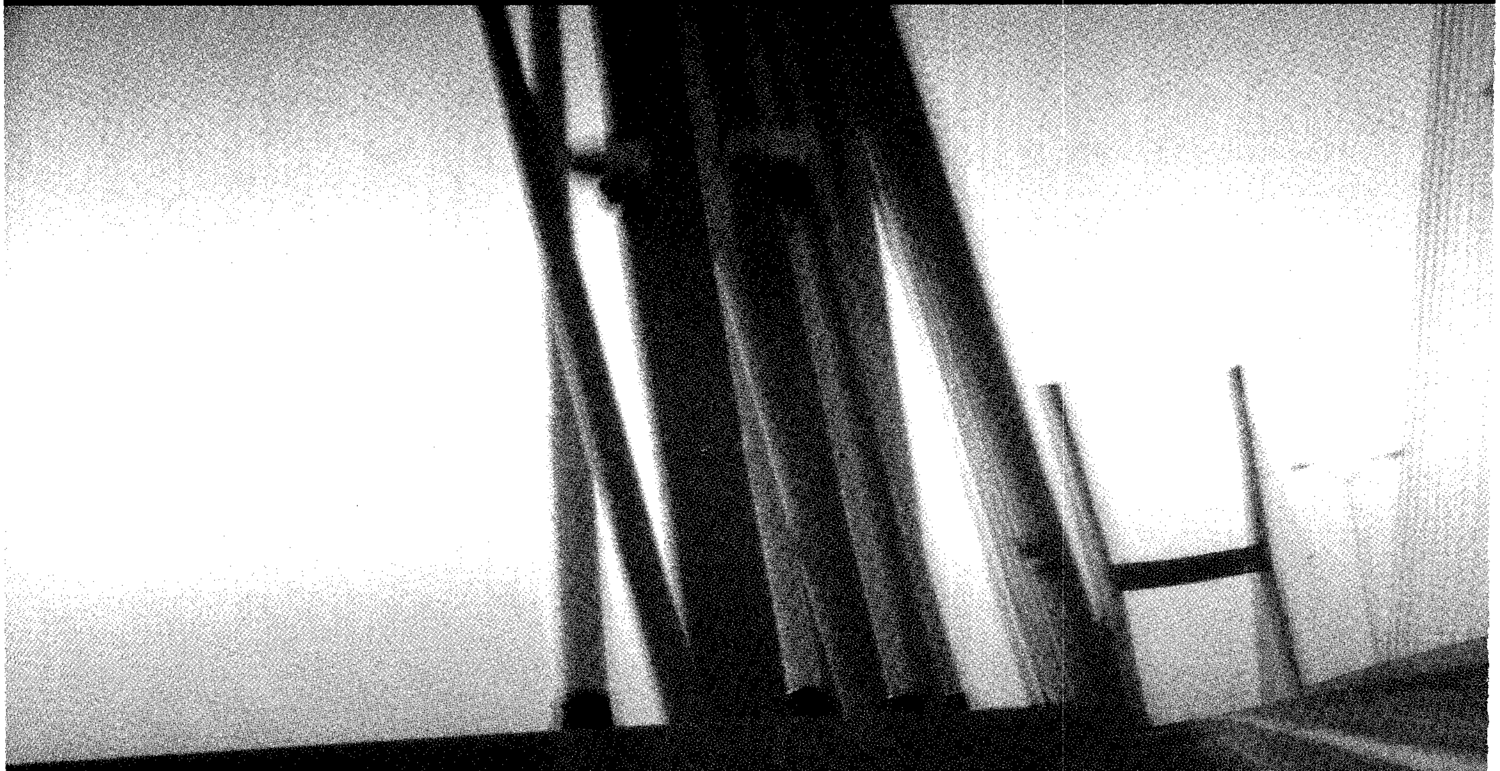

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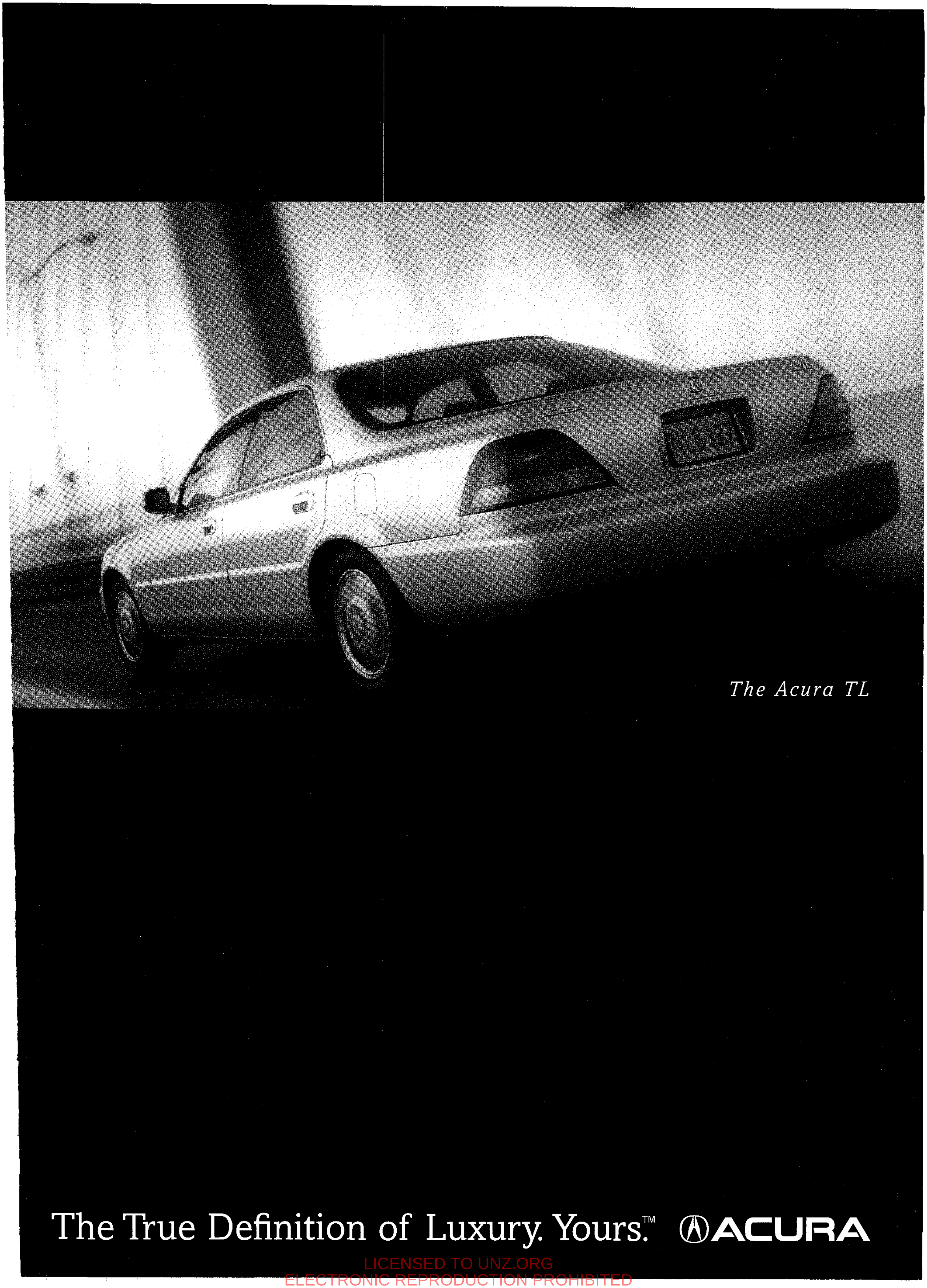
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THE SPORTING SCENE

KID DYNAMITE BLOWS UP

Ever since Mike Tyson got out of prison, he has been surrounded by a paranoid and garish world of his own creation. The author reports from ringside on why the fighter couldn't be saved from himself.

BY DAVID REMNICK

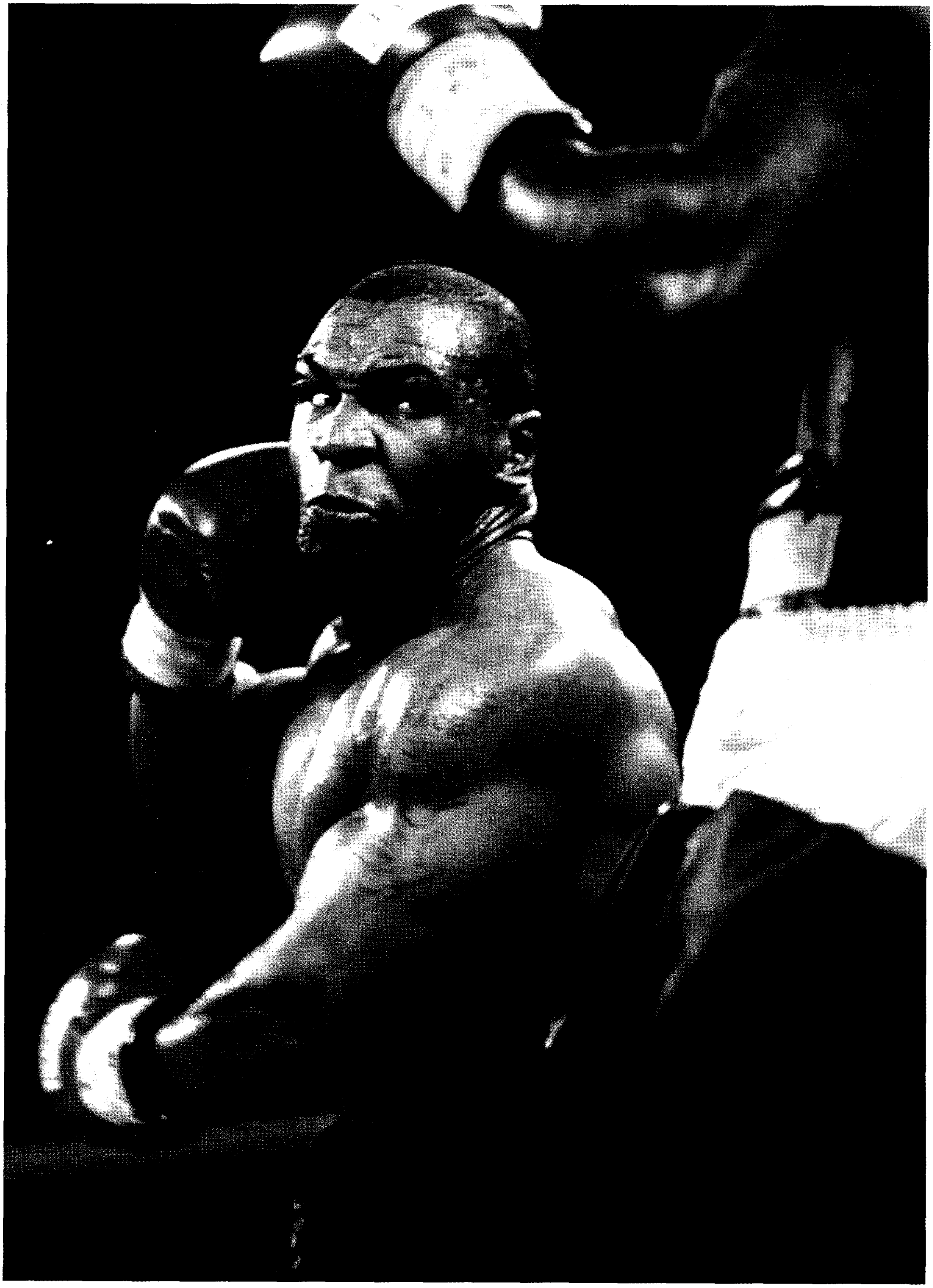
THE conventions of the ring demand that a fighter in training become a monk. For months at a time, he hardens his body on roadwork and beefsteak, and practices an enforced loneliness—even (tradition has it) sexual loneliness—the better to focus the mind on war. Mike Tyson's monastery in the Nevada desert is a mansion next door to Wayne Newton's mansion, and it could be said to lack the usual austerity. There is a chandelier worthy of Cap d'Antibes. There is a painting on silk of Diana Ross. There are books, magazines, a big television, leather couches. But the diversions are not what they could be. When Tyson is not preparing for fights, he keeps lions and tigers around as pets and wrestles with them. "Sometimes I go swimming with the tiger," he told a visitor. "But, personally, I'm a lion man. Lions are very obedient, like dogs." Tyson was keeping his pets elsewhere, though. He has estates in Ohio, in Connecticut, and off a fairway on the Congressional Country Club, in Bethesda, Maryland. The big cats are most often in Ohio. The Nevada mansion is surrounded by life-size statues of warrior heroes whom Tyson has read about and come to revere: Genghis Khan, Toussaint-L'Ouverture, Alexander the Great, Hannibal. "Hannibal was very courageous," Tyson said. "He rode elephants through Cartilage." In a week's time, Tyson himself would be going through cartilage, too.

After spending three years in an Indiana prison for raping a teen-ager named Desiree Washington, Tyson went back to fighting in 1995. He denied to the end that he had ever raped anyone, but he said he was a better man now. Tyson converted to Islam—indeed, the bumper sticker on his Bentley reads "I ♥ Allah"—and he told his visitors in jail that he had spent his time studying the Koran, Machiavelli, Voltaire, Dumas, the lives of Meyer Lansky and Bugsy Siegel, "and a lot of Communist literature." He ordered up icons for his shoulders, a diptych tattoo: Arthur Ashe on one side, Mao Zedong on the other. He declared himself ready to regain his place in boxing. He would reclaim not only his title but also his image of invincibility. Iron Mike. Kid Dynamite. Once more, he would be the fighter who had expressed only disappointment after a knockout of one Jesse Ferguson, saying, "I wanted to hit him one more time in the nose so that bone could go up into his brain."

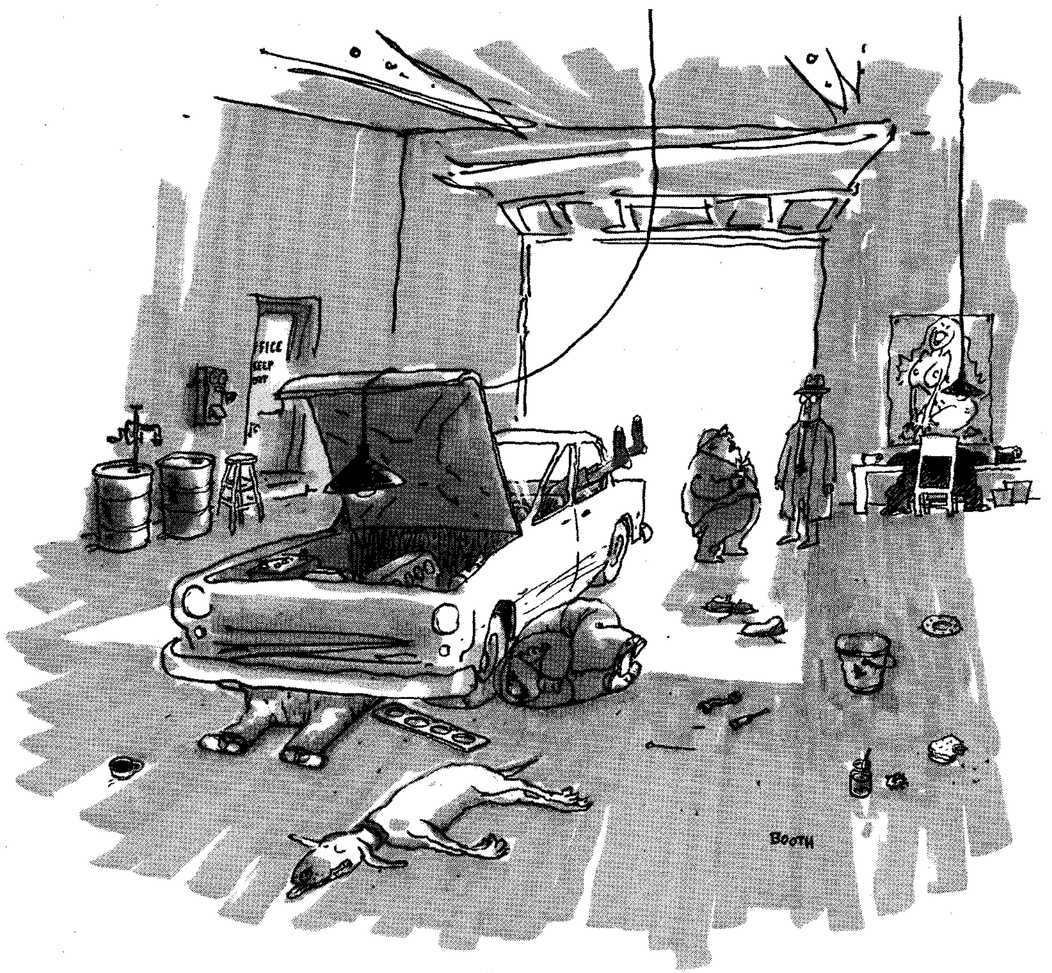
But after easily dispatching a collection of tomato cans who provided a warmup drill worth tens of millions of dollars, Tyson finally met a real fighter, if not a great one, named Evander Holyfield, who backed him down and beat him up. Holyfield took Tyson's title last November, in one of the cleverest displays of boxing guile since February, 1964, when Muhammad Ali, then Cassius Clay, stunned another invincible—Tyson's fistic precursor, Sonny Liston. Liston, like Tyson, had grown up in an environment of crime and never left it; Liston had done time for armed robbery, he mugged people, he beat up a cop, he broke heads for the Mob. And, like Tyson, he was considered a killer in the ring, unbeatable. Against Clay, Liston had been favored so strongly that the lead boxing writer for the *Times* skipped the fight and left it to a rookie in the office, Robert Lipsyte. But Clay, with his magnificent speed, dodged Liston's plodding bombs and bloodied the big man's eye. Liston quit on his stool, claiming a sore shoulder. Against Holyfield, Tyson had been similarly unmasked. "He's like any bully," said Gil Clancy, one of the game's legendary trainers. "Once Tyson saw his own blood, he backed down." The referee stopped the beating in the eleventh round. When it was over, Tyson was in such a daze that he turned to one of his handlers and asked, "What round did I knock him out in?"

The rematch with Holyfield would be worth thirty million dollars to Tyson, thirty-five million to Holyfield. The fight's promoter, Don King, whose good word, of course, is all one ever needs, promised record receipts for the live gate and pay-per-view television: "A hundred and fifty million, maybe two hundred million. After all, we got three billion people in Red China alone!" Whatever. If Tyson won, he would regain not only his championship but also his place as "the baddest man on the planet." Holyfield would be remembered as a fighter who on a given night had risen above himself and then, in the rematch, fell to earth.

After coming out of jail, Tyson showed signs of domestic stability. In April, he married a doctor named Monica Turner. (Turner's first husband was sentenced to ten years in prison on a cocaine-dealing charge.) Tyson and Turner have one child; another is due this summer. Until now, marriage had been a miserable topic for Tyson. His first wife, the television star Robin Givens, was famously manipulative. She had been a Sarah Lawrence girl and, even in public, treated Tyson with an airy condescension. There were, in some cynical corners, suspicions that Givens had actually married for money. Tyson was not slow to express his annoyance. The former light-heavyweight champion José Torres once asked Tyson what the best blow he had ever thrown was. "Man, I'll never forget that punch," Tyson said. "It was when I fought with Robin in Steve's apartment. She really offended me and I went *bam*, and she flew backward, hit-



"I wasn't there when he killed the guy," Tyson said of Don King. "But, shit, if a guy got killed he was probably doing something he wasn't supposed to be doing. I'm a strong believer in that."



"Nap time."

ting every fucking wall in the apartment." The marriage ended in divorce.

Unlike Givens, Turner has, for the most part, stayed out of her husband's business affairs and out of camera range, and there have been no reports of fights, physical or otherwise. Turner mainly stayed away from Las Vegas. Tyson's most frequent visitors to his desert house were the members of his entourage, each in his own way a sterling influence: Don King, a former numbers runner from Cleveland who once stomped a man to death in a dispute over six hundred dollars and then became the greatest (and most bloviated) carnival barker since Barnum; Tyson's co-managers, Rory Holloway, an old friend, and John Horne, a failed standup comic from Albany who specializes in yelling at reporters; Tyson's trainer, Richie Giachetti, a street guy from Cleveland who worked with Larry Holmes; and a self-described "master motivator" named Steve (Crocodile) Fitch, who admits that "in another life" he spent five years in jail for manslaughter. ("But I didn't do it," he told me. "A complete setup.") Crocodile proved to be a prophetic character. During the week leading up to the fight, he could be seen in fatigues and wraparound shades, all the while screaming his suggestive war cries: "It's time for ultimate battle! Ultimate battle! Time to bite! Time to bite!"

TYSON avoided the press—especially the print press. Horne and Holloway had done a good job of convincing him that the papers were filled with nothing but lies, that the New York reporters on the boxing beat—Michael Katz, of the *News*, Wallace Matthews, of the *Post*—were out to get them. Early in the morning, before the sun was high, Tyson ran along the empty desert roads. Then he sparred in the gym. His workouts were closed. For recreation, he watched one gangster movie after another, sometimes through the night. He is partial to James Cagney, Edward G. Robinson, and John Garfield. He can recite whole scenes of "Raging Bull," "On the Waterfront," and—his favorite—"The Harder They Fall."

Tyson would have preferred to be alone—or, at least, alone with his entourage and his movies—but Don King knew that in order to rouse pay-per-view orders the goat had to be fed. Tyson would not allow interviews at his house, but five days before the fight he agreed to go out to King's place to meet with a group of writers. And so on an afternoon of long shadows and hundred-degree heat a couple of white vans pulled out of the driveway of the M-G-M Grand Hotel, away from the new family-friendly downtown, away from the Brooklyn Bridge and the black glass pyramid of Cheops, away from the palace of the Caesars and the Folies Bergere, out of earshot, finally, of the unending music of the city, the air-conditioned hum and the mad electronic ringing of a thousand acres of slot machines and the slushy spill of silver coins pouring into curved silver trays. Don King does not live on the Strip. He lives out where it is quiet, at the outermost edge of the city, where the desert resumes.

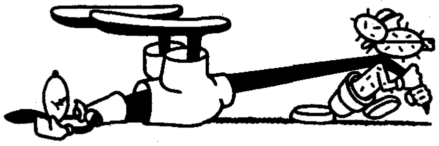
In all honesty, no one would ride to the edge of the desert to talk with Evander Holyfield. No one much cared about Holyfield. He was likable enough. But he was dull copy. He hadn't raped anyone. He hadn't been to jail. He talked about Jesus Christ all the time and literally sang gospel music while hitting the heavy bag. He seemed like a good fellow, but what story did he offer? He talked in the polite clichés of doing my best, having faith in my abilities and in the will of God—but what did he mean? Heavyweight-championship fights, from the days of John L. Sullivan onward, are stories, morality plays, and this story, regardless of its end, was all about Tyson. This was a war between middle-class aspiration and ghetto insolence, gospel and rap. Without Tyson there was no sense of danger, no interest, no hundred million dollars.

"People are full of shit. They want to see something dark," Tyson's former trainer Teddy Atlas told me. "People want to feel close to it and in on it, but, of course, only from the distance of their suburban homes. They want to have the benefit of comfort, security, safety, respect, and at the same time the privilege of watching something out of control—even promote it being out of control—as long as we can be secure that we're not accountable for it. With Tyson, the dark thing was always the anticipation that someone was going to get knocked out. The whole Kid Dynamite thing. But we wanted to believe that the monster was also a nice kid. We wanted to believe that Mike Tyson was an American story: the kid who grows up in the horrible ghetto and then converts that dark power into a good cause, into boxing. But then the story takes a turn. The dark side overwhelms him. He's cynical, he's out of control. And now the story is even better. It's like a double feature now, like you're getting 'Heidi' and 'Godzilla' at the same time."

King's minions wanted the reporters to understand that this was a special invitation—a very rare one, these days. The whole charade seemed absurd to the reporters who had been around boxing for a while. Until not so long ago, fighters before a big bout were available athletes, the least guarded of men. Like sultans, they often used to greet their visitors propped up on a few pillows in bed; reporters would sit perched at the edge of the bed or hard on the floor, notebooks out, ready to catch pearls. Archie Moore, the great light heavyweight, could unburden himself of a monologue worthy of Molly Bloom or the Duke of Gloucester. Boxers were free of the solemn self-importance of modern athletes in the team sports. They liked having people around. In the moments before fighting for the championship, Floyd Patterson napped in his dressing room, and a few writers were allowed to stay around, close enough to register the movement under the champion's eyelids, the timbre of his snore. Patterson would describe his dreams, the depths of his fear. He talked and talked, one of the great analysands of the prize ring.

Tyson used to be like that. When he was coming up as a fighter, and even as a young champion, he loved to talk to the press, tell his story. He was immensely aware of himself as the star of an ongoing Cagney movie. Some writers even saw a sweetness in him, the yearning for love and a home. Certainly it was a life beyond the imagination of the middle-class reporters who came calling. He was the kid from Amboy Street in Brooklyn's Brownsville, an especially vicious and hopeless delinquent. When he was six, his idea of a prank was to slit his big brother's arm with a razor while he slept. His father was nowhere in evidence, his mother was overwhelmed by poverty. Tyson idolized the pimps and the thieves in the neighborhood, and by the time he was ten he was mugging old ladies and shooting into crowds for kicks. As he told his story, he could sense the titillation in the writer, and more details would pour out: "I'd shoot real close to them, skin them or something, make them take off their pants and then go run in the streets." After he had racked up dozens of arrests and was sent off to reform school, Cus D'Amato, an old and eccentric trainer who had settled upstate, along the Hudson, took him in. D'Amato was a kindly paranoiac. When he was still working out of the Gramercy Gym, in Manhattan, he used to sleep in the back with nothing to keep him company but a shotgun and a dog. To his fighters, he was a kind of Father Divine, at once inspiring and full of righteous gas. He preached the value of terror, the way that all fighters faced fear and the good ones learned to harness it, to make it their friend. He was an ascetic. Money, he said, "was something to throw off the back of trains." Writers loved D'Amato, the way any writer would have loved, say, Moll Flanders had she been presented, whole, in real life, and available for quotation.

Tyson represented D'Amato's wish on dying—the chance, after Patterson and José Torres, to have a third world champion. As if to satisfy every convention of the boxing movie, D'Amato "adopted" Tyson, became his legal guardian, but he died a year before his "son" won the crown. On winning the title, Tyson wept. If only Cus had seen it, he said, if only Cus were here. It was over the top, even for Hollywood, but not for the conventions of the boxing story.



Tyson was also good copy partly because he was brutal and unabashed about being so. Unlike Ali, whose helium rants usually had more to do with camp comedy or the prophecies of Elijah Muhammad than with the violence of his profession, Tyson was blunt, clinical. He knew he had been trained to hurt other men, and he saw no good reason to deflect attention from that. He was in the beating business and he had never acquired the tact or the reflexes to say he didn't enjoy it. In his comically high voice, he spoke of throwing punches with "bad intentions to vital areas," of blows to the heart, to the kidneys, to the liver, and the pleasure he took in delivering them. He talked of his yearning to break an opponent's eardrum, to shatter his will, to make him "cry like a woman."

At the same time, Tyson was self-aware, almost academic in his regard for boxing. In a time when most baseball players hardly know the name Jackie Robinson, Tyson grew obsessed not just with all the obvious contemporaries and near-contemporaries but also with Harry Greb and Kid Chocolate, with Willie Pep and Stanley Ketchel. The writers ate that up. With boxing under attack as crippling, as atavistic and cruel, his talk made them feel that their subject was important, somehow—not merely a skein of beatings in the parking lots of betting parlors but a matter of aesthetics and history. Tyson spent hundreds of hours watching old fights, and from those films he not only learned the details of his craft but also assumed certain traits of favored precursors. He cut his hair to resemble Jack Dempsey's. He took to wearing bulky button-up sweaters because he had seen such sweaters on some of the old fighters in the old newsreels. And so, while Tyson's story was not Ali's, while he lacked that level of wit, physical improvisation, and epic, his story was a good one, good enough for half a dozen biographies, good enough, certainly, to make him the best-paid athlete in history.

We drove out Flamingo Road, past the plastic-surgery parlors, past all the clip joints and software palaces that look as if they were built last week. We arrived at a "gated community," the sort of high-security mansion neighborhoods that you see now in every city where there is sun and money and heightened fear of larceny. We rang the buzzer and the gates swung open. Don King's house is Spanish style, perhaps—a riot of white stucco. There were Range Rovers and B.M.W.s parked outside and an enormous satellite dish parked on the roof. We walked up the front steps and were greeted by a portrait of Don King. The real thing was in the kitchen.

"Welcome! Welcome to my home!" he boomed. King invited us in for an early dinner. He had ordered out from Popeyes.

King is the evil genius of boxing, the latest in a long line. His electrified hair is merely a way to use "personality" to hide his substance. In his way, he is even more powerful than the so-called Octopus Inc., of the nineteen-fifties—James Norris's corrupt International Boxing Club. Tyson, like so many boxers, cannot bear King. He does not especially trust King. But he does business with King, because King is the singular presence in big-time boxing. They make a lot of money together, and so Tyson is as indulgent of King's conniving as King is of Tyson's tantrums. There is no profit in judgment.

In the kitchen, King was telling me that three billion people would watch the fight. The key was penetration, he said—that is, how many people would sign up for the fifty-dollar fee and order the fight on pay-per-view. "If we get ten per cent of the universe, then we'll be fine," he added. He never quite explained what that meant. He knew I would not bother to ask. "Mike generates more capital than anyone in the history of the world. Why do they want to destroy him, the goose that laid the golden egg?"

After a long wait, Tyson showed up. He took his place on a white leather couch. As he waited for the first question, he assumed the expression of a man who has eaten a bad egg and is waiting to be sick. One by one the questions came, and Tyson answered them in a way designed to make the questioner feel like an idiot. Yes, he felt good. No, he wouldn't make the same mistakes again against Holyfield. Yes, he expected to win. But, no, it wouldn't change his life if he lost. "The way my deals are set up, I'm pretty much set." At times, he spoke as a man obsessed less with a fight than with the rational distribution of his mutual funds.

To be with Tyson even for just a couple of hours is to witness the power of a ghetto kid's fatalism. He has, his accountants would attest, all he could ever want. He will never—or should never—end up like Joe Louis, coked up on the casino floor and working as a greeter. And yet he is forever saying "My life is over" and "I am taking the blows for my children." He has a boundless sense of self-drama, of the dark future. Even here, surrounded by his co-managers Rory Holloway and John Horne, he said he had no friends, he trusted no one. And who could doubt him?

"We have to trust, but people by nature are not to be trusted," Tyson said. "That's just the way it is. I got a Machiavellian effect as far as that's concerned. I'm not a philosopher, I'm not Machiavelli in that respect, but you can't be a person always willing to do good in an environment where people are always willing to do bad. You know what I mean?

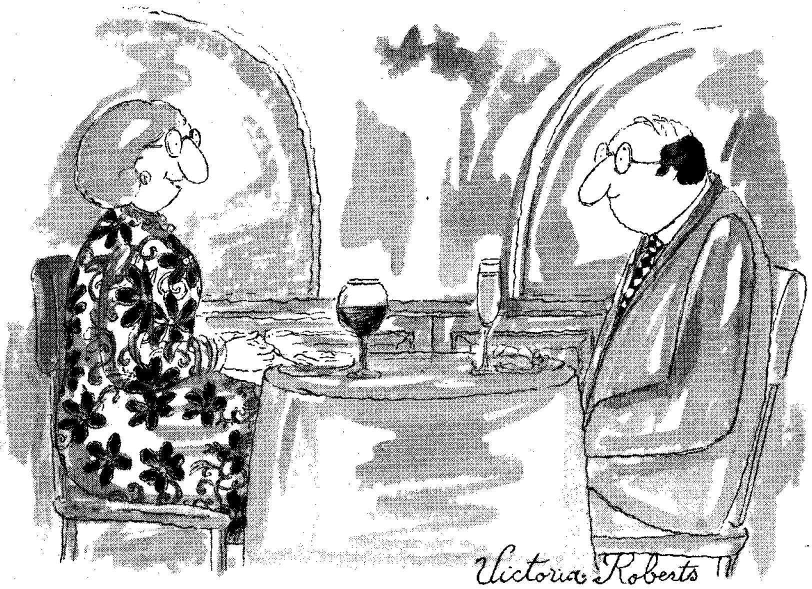
"I have no friends, man. When I got out of prison, all my old friends, they had to go. If you don't have a purpose in my life, man, you have to go. . . . Why would you want someone around in your life if they have no purpose? Just to have a pal or a buddy? I got a wife. My wife can be my pal and buddy. I'm not trying to be cold, but it's something I picked up. . . . If I'm gonna get screwed, I'm not gonna get screwed over by the people that screwed me before. I'm gonna get screwed by the *new* people.

"I've been taken advantage of all my life. I've been used, I've been dehumanized, I've been humiliated, and I've been betrayed. That's basically the outcome of my life, and I'm kind of bitter, kind of angry at certain people about it. . . . Everyone in boxing makes out well except for the fighter. He's the only one who suffers, basically. He's the only one who's on Skid Row. He's the only one who loses his mind. He sometimes goes insane, he sometimes goes on the bottle, because it's a highly intensive, pressure sport, and a lot of people lose it. There's so much you can take and then you break."

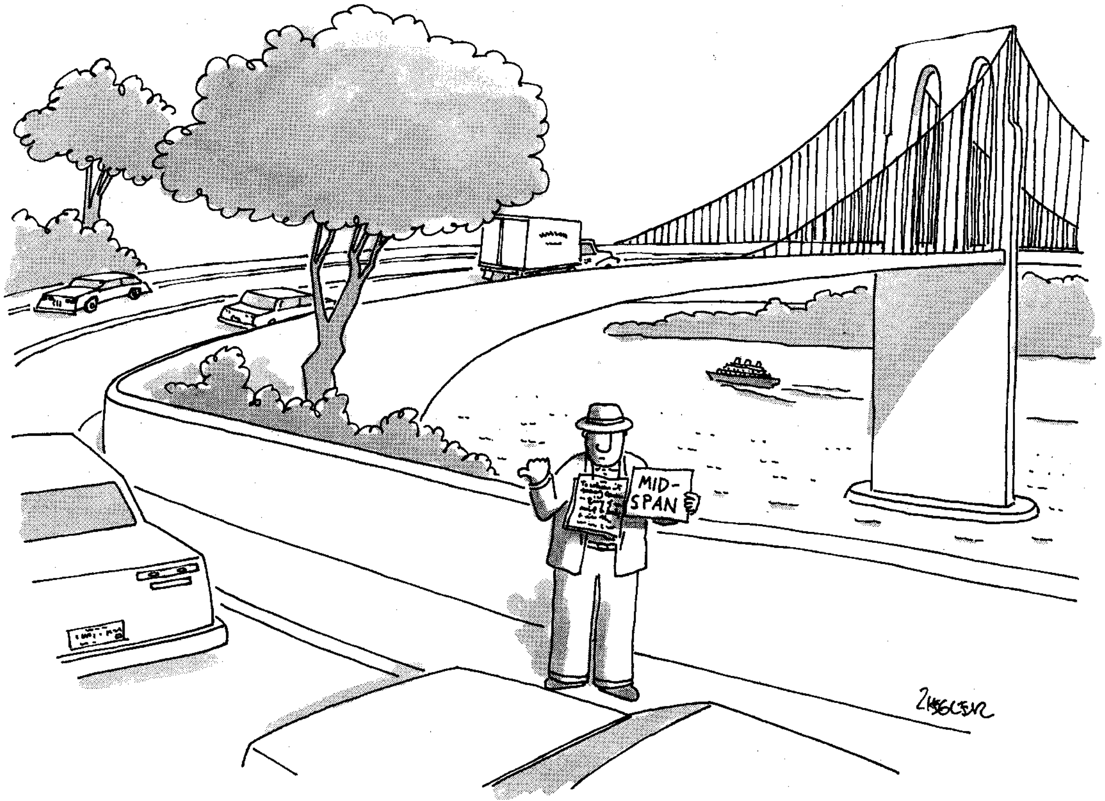
In an effort to lighten Tyson's mood and, not incidentally, the mood of this sorry conversation, some of the writers started asking about a subject close to his heart: his new family. For a few moments, he was as fuzzy as a character in "thirtysomething."

"That's all I have, my children," he said. "Wives are known to run off and fall in love with other people, because they are human, even die. But you have to take care of children. . . . The way I see it is that every fight I have is for their future. Every fight. Every fight is a different future for my children." Tyson said that he played games with his kids, ate ice cream with them. "They love 'Barney,' " he said. "I *hate* 'Barney.'

"I have a stepdaughter and one day



"I was Mrs. Webb in my high-school production of 'Our Town.' Who were you?"



she was crying and she says, 'Mama, Jane don't want to play with me today.' And I burst out, 'She doesn't want to play with you? Then fuck her!' My wife didn't like that too much. But we're different people. She studied psychology and believes in working on a kid's mind. I believe in being strict—if you get out of line, you're getting hit! They're too young for that now, but I'm a strong believer in that. I think kids should learn discipline. If they get out of line, they should learn discipline. At what age? I don't know. Ten years old?

"See, I've been beaten all my life. My kids have parents, one's a doctor, a bright woman, and a father who's a . . . a father who's rich. I had an alcoholic and a pimp for parents. So they're gonna have a great life, if they don't turn out to be bad children. . . . I just don't want them out on the street, because these hustlers, they can be very exciting, people gravitate to them. I survived it, but they may not be lucky enough to survive. All my real friends are in prison or dead. The ones still out are so messed up on drugs they don't know their own name."

It was as if Tyson knew something that no one else knew—not his accountants, not his managers. He was convinced of his own wretched end. Nothing, save the well-being of his kids, would please him. Last summer, Tyson threw himself a million-dollar three-day-long thirtieth-birthday party at his estate in Farmington, Connecticut. There were magnums of Cristal, and cigars rolled specially for the occasion. Tyson handed out B.M.W.s and Range Rovers to six of his flunkies. And yet he had an awful time. "I don't know half the people here," he said as he wandered his many acres. "This isn't what I wanted."

Horne and Holloway may know nothing about boxing, but they have been expert at feeding Tyson's sense of persecution. "Nobody's on our side," Tyson told us as his co-managers nodded like proud puppeteers. "The courts are against us, the corporations are against us, the news reporters are against us, the papers—your bosses—are against us. We have nobody on our side, and we're still fighting and we're still doing well. If we had you guys on our side, we'd be a phenomenon!"

From the back of the room, King yelled, "If you would just print the truth! You write what people throw out to you as a smoke screen!"

"The fact is, they call us monsters, that we're inhuman, they want people to be afraid of us," Tyson said. (In fact, Tyson has always cultivated that image. He once told his former friend José Torres, "I like to hurt women when I make love to them. I like to hear them scream with pain, to see them bleed. It gives me pleasure.")

"Who do you mean?" one of the reporters said. "Who's calling you monsters?"

"You. Not you individually, but reporters," Tyson said. "They write that we're monsters, that we're hideous, that we commit heinous crimes."

"Let's take the Newfield book, for example," said King, referring to Jack Newfield's scrupulous biography of him. "The Newfield book is all lies, and yet everyone uses it as the defining factor on me! Everything in there is a lie! So a guy who's a good writer knows how to *speculize* and *dramatize* those lies! You know what I mean?"

"They hope it leads to you being incarcerated," said Horne, who was standing at Tyson's shoulder.

"Look," Tyson said. "Don is still a fool to have you over to his house and talk to you. He had to beg me to come over here and talk to you, because of what you guys write about me. The people that know me, love me, they read this. It feels like shit.

"And this guy, knowing you guys ain't gonna give him no justice, he still, stupidly, has you guys in his house talking to you, knowing you'll write it was a good fight and then try to put his ass in jail. They're gonna write some madman tales, how he robbed this guy and killed this other guy. I don't know. I wasn't there when he killed the guy, but, shit, if a guy got killed he was probably doing something he wasn't supposed to be doing. You know what I mean? I'm a strong believer in that. Not in a drive-by shooting, but very few people get killed for no reason, from where I come from."

King was delighted by this moving

show of support. "Just watch me prove that he attacked me," he said. "All I want is fair play! I'm still crazy enough to love America!"

We, the Americans, must have been moved to the core. There was a long silence. A European writer shyly turned to Tyson and said, "Mike, with all of that said, why don't you come out more and go on Larry King again, and go on David Letterman and set the record straight?"

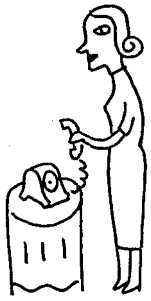
Tyson's eyes narrowed. He flapped his hand in disgust. "Ah, fuck y'all. Fuck y'all," he said. "I don't have to suck your dick to justify me being a good guy. Listen, man, I'm a man! I don't go begging someone to love me."

"It's not begging," the European ventured. "It's—"

"Yes, it is!" Tyson said. "You see O. J. Simpson, he's going around all the time trying to prove his innocence. By court of law, he's innocent. Maybe common sense tells you he's not, but in a court of law he's innocent. I'm not going to go around saying, 'Well, I've done this or this for this organization.' The hell with that, man."

Now Horne started egging Tyson on. "When the intention is to destroy you from the beginning, you can't get no level playing field to set the record straight," Horne said. "Let me say one thing. All of us live different lives. None of y'all have lived the lives that we have. We have different perceptions of things. . . . You guys go into back rooms, you conference about everything, you help each other out, to destroy somebody who is the only reason you are all out here. No other fighter takes you out of the country, no other fighter makes your jobs so interesting."

Finally, Tyson had the presence of mind to wave Horne off, to settle King down. All he really wanted us to know was that he was unknowable. He had probably given more interviews, in his time, than Dora ever gave to Freud, but it didn't matter. "Look," he said. "I'm harder on myself than the goddam reporters. But they don't know me well enough to write what I'm about, that I'm a monster, that I'm this or that. No one knows me. . . . I'd like to be written up like the old-timers. There's no doubt about it, I'm a wild man. I've had my share of the good times. But that's just part of the business, that's just who Mike is. I work hard, I live hard, I play hard, I die hard."



LIKE mediocre fiction, fights for the heavyweight championship of the world are invariably freighted with the solemnity of deeper meanings. It is not enough that one man shock another man's brain and send him reeling. There must be politics, too—or, at least, great lumps of symbol, historical subplots, metaphysical frosting. In team sports—in football, baseball, basketball—there are individual stars, there are rivalries, but, finally, the athletics is the thing. A team athlete's talent is usually the mastery of some peculiar and relatively recent invention: kicking a pig's bladder through a set of posts, swinging a stick of polished ash, tossing a ball through an iron hoop. Boxing is ancient, simple, lonely. There is hardly any artifice at all. Padded gloves and the gauze and tape underneath do little to protect the fighters; they merely prevent broken hands, and allow for more punching, more pain. Boxers go into the ring alone, nearly naked, and they succeed or fail on the basis of the most elementary criteria: their ability to give and receive pain, their will to endure their own fear. Since character—the will of a person stretched to extremes—is so obviously at the center of boxing, there is an undeniable urge to know the fighters, to derive some meaning from the conflict of those characters.

John L. Sullivan's triumphs were triumphs of the working class, the immigrant wave, "the people." Joe Louis fought the moral war over German fascism—fascism coming in the bruised and prostrate person of Max Schmeling. Most of all, the fights have come to be parables tinctured with the issues and conflicts of race. Indeed, some of the first boxing matches in America were held on plantations before the Civil War. White slave owners (the promoters) set up fights between their chattel. The slaves were often commanded to fight to the death. Was it such a great leap from there to the M-G-M Grand? "If [the heavyweights] become champions they begin to have inner lives like Hemingway or Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy or Faulkner, Joyce or Melville or Conrad or Lawrence or Proust," Norman Mailer wrote twenty-six years ago in *Life*.

> Dempsey was alone and Tunney could never explain himself and Sharkey could never believe himself nor Schmeling nor Braddock, and Carnera was sad and Baer an indecipherable clown; great heavyweights like Louis had the loneliness of the ages in their silence, and men like Marciano were mystified by a power which seemed to have been granted them. With the advent, however, of the great modern Black heavyweights, Patterson, Liston, then Clay and Frazier, perhaps the loneliness gave way to what it had been protecting itself against—a surrealistic situation unstable beyond belief. Being a Black heavyweight champion in the second half of the twentieth century (with Black revolutions opening all over the world) was now not unlike being Jack Johnson, Malcolm X, and Frank Costello all in one.

Black fighters found themselves fighting intricate wars over racial types, over shifting notions of masculinity, decency, and class. In 1962, with the endorsements of President Kennedy and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Floyd Patterson fought in the name of the black middle class and white liberals against Liston, the gruff ex-con, who represented, as Amiri Baraka (then LeRoi Jones) put it, "the big black Negro in every white man's hallway, waiting to do him in." But Patterson was not physically equal to his preposterous moral task. Liston flattened him in the first round. So shamed was Patterson that he fled Comiskey Park disguised in a fake beard and mustache and drove all night back to New York. He had not merely been defeated. He had let down the race, he had not fulfilled his meaning, his role in the story.

It is hard to imagine today the sense of disappointment in Patterson's loss. A columnist for the Los Angeles *Times* wrote that having Liston as champion "is like finding a live bat on a string under your Christmas tree." Some papers felt free to refer to Liston as a "jungle beast," a "gorilla." Only Murray Kempton, writing in the *Post*, was able to find an arch note of optimism in Liston's ascent. "The Negro heavyweights, as Negroes tend to do, have usually given that sense of being men above their calling," Kempton wrote. "Floyd Patterson sounded like a Freedom Rider. We return to reality with Liston. We have at last a heavyweight champion on the moral level of the men who own him.

This is the source of horror which Liston has aroused; he is boxing's perfect symbol. He tells us the truth about it. The heavyweight championship is, after all, a fairly squalid office."

Liston tried desperately to please. He promised to be a good champion, to emulate Joe Louis. He explained that he had been one of twenty-five children in rural Arkansas, that he was illiterate, abused by a violent father. He apologized for his "terrible mistakes." But the country seemed not to accept the apologies; it was hard for whites and blacks alike to countenance a man who, when asked why he would not join in the civil-rights marches in the South, had answered, "I ain't got no dog-proof ass." People only laughed when Liston started associating with priests. After Cassius Clay beat Liston in Miami—and then, as Muhammad Ali, beat him again—his story took a tragic course. Liston retired to Las Vegas, where he fought a little, hung out with gangsters like Ash Resnick, and in 1971 died with a needle in his arm. The funeral procession went down the Strip. For a few minutes, people came out of the casinos, squinting in the sun and saying farewell to Liston. The Ink Spots sang "Sunny."

For a long time, especially since coming home from prison, Tyson has seen himself in Liston. Watching films of Liston working out to the old James Brown rendition of "Night Train," he said, was "orgasmic."

"Sonny Liston, I identify with him the most," he said. "That may sound morbid and grim, but I pretty much identify with that life. He wanted people to respect him or love him, but it never happened. You can't make people respect and love you by craving it. You've got to *demand* it.

"People may not have liked him because of his background, but the people who got to know him as an intimate person have a totally different opinion. He had a wife. I'm sure she didn't think he was a piece of garbage. . . . Everyone respected Sonny Liston's ability. The point is respecting him as a man. No one can second-guess my ability, either. But I'm going to be respected. I demand that. You have no choice. You couldn't be in my presence if you didn't."

A FEW weeks before the fight, I went up to Michigan to see Liston's conqueror. Muhammad Ali lives on a manicured farm in a small town near the Indiana border called Berrien Springs. It was obvious to everyone who saw him tremble as he ignited the Olympic torch in Atlanta that Parkinson's disease has all but silenced Ali and forced him to wear a grim mask on what had been the century's most sparkling face. But out of the way of television cameras, which make him nervous and even more rigid than usual, Ali can show delight. He is especially delighted to watch himself when his body was fluid and his voice the most widely recognized in the world. We spent the better part of an afternoon watching videotapes of his fights, the early fights with Liston and then the first bout against Patterson. Ali leaned back and smiled as he watched himself, in black and white, dissect Liston, duck his blows, and sting him with jabs until Liston looked very slow and very sad.

"Ah, Sonny," Ali said. "The big ugly bear!"

Now Liston was quitting. He sat slumped on his stool. Now Ali's younger self was standing at the ropes, hysterical in his triumph, shouting down at the reporters who had dismissed him as a loudmouth and a fake, "Eat your words! Eat your words! I am the greatest!"

"They all thought I'd lose," Ali said. "Thought he'd tear me up."

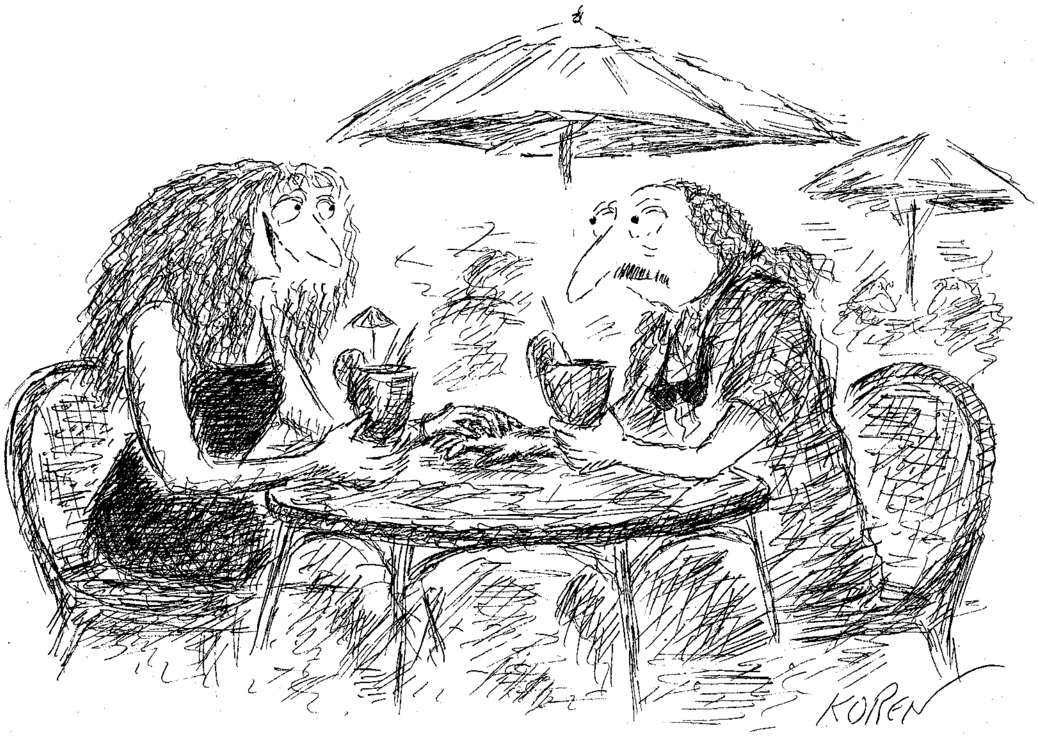
After a while, I asked Ali about Tyson and whether he compared to Liston.

"Liston was faster than Tyson, but came straight ahead," he said. His voice was whispery, almost all breath.

"Could Tyson have beaten you?" I asked.

"Don't make me laugh," Ali said, and he was laughing. "Tyson don't have it. He don't *have* it." For a second, I wondered what "it" was, but then The Greatest made it clear. He pointed to his head.

ABOUT a week later, I took the ferry to Staten Island to visit Teddy Atlas, who had trained Tyson when he was learning to fight in Cus D'Amato's gym. Atlas is one of boxing's most appealing characters, the son of a doctor who used to treat patients in the ghetto for a couple of dollars. He was rebellious, a street kid who learned to box. A knife fight on Rikers Island left him with a scar on his face that runs from his hairline to his jawline. When Atlas was barely twenty, D'Amato taught him how to train fighters and then entrusted him



"You're really nice, Richard. I was hoping I could fix you up with my mom."

with Tyson. Atlas taught Tyson the catechism according to D'Amato, the peekaboo style of holding the gloves up near the face, the need to overcome the fear inside. During one amateur fight, Tyson told Atlas between rounds that his hand was broken and he couldn't go on, but Atlas knew it was just fear, the fear of disgrace, and he pushed Tyson back out into the ring and to a victory.

Atlas, however, grew disillusioned as he saw D'Amato indulge Tyson in one ugly incident after another. Tyson harassed girls in school, beat other kids up, threatened teachers, and D'Amato nearly always found a way to make it good with the school, with the police. He would have his champion, one way or another. He was not raising a son, after all. He was raising a fighter. But in 1982, when Tyson molested Atlas's adolescent sister-in-law, Atlas lost it. He held a gun to Tyson's head and threatened him. D'Amato never punished Tyson. He did, however, get rid of Atlas.

Tyson's co-manager John Horne had told me that "the only difference between Mike Tyson and Michael Jordan is Mr. and Mrs. Jordan." But Atlas thought that was too simple, too easy on Tyson. When I asked him if he had overreacted when he held the gun to Tyson's head, he said, "This was a kid who did not hesitate to tear out the soul of another human being. He completely violated other people. And then he just moved on.

"Mike is very selfish. He was bred to be selfish. I remember sitting in the kitchen once at Cus's place and there were two plates of spaghetti, one for Mike and one for some other kid, another fighter, who hadn't sat down yet. Tyson went to take the other kid's food, too, and Camille"—D'Amato's companion—"said, 'Mike, no, don't take it.' But Cus said, 'No, go ahead, take it. You're gonna be the next champion of the world. Eat it.' Tyson was just fifteen or sixteen, and it was the wrong lesson. Listen, there are plenty of kids from Brownsville with that background and some of them are great people, people who find something in themselves to trigger a sense of accountability, the sense that someone else in the universe matters."

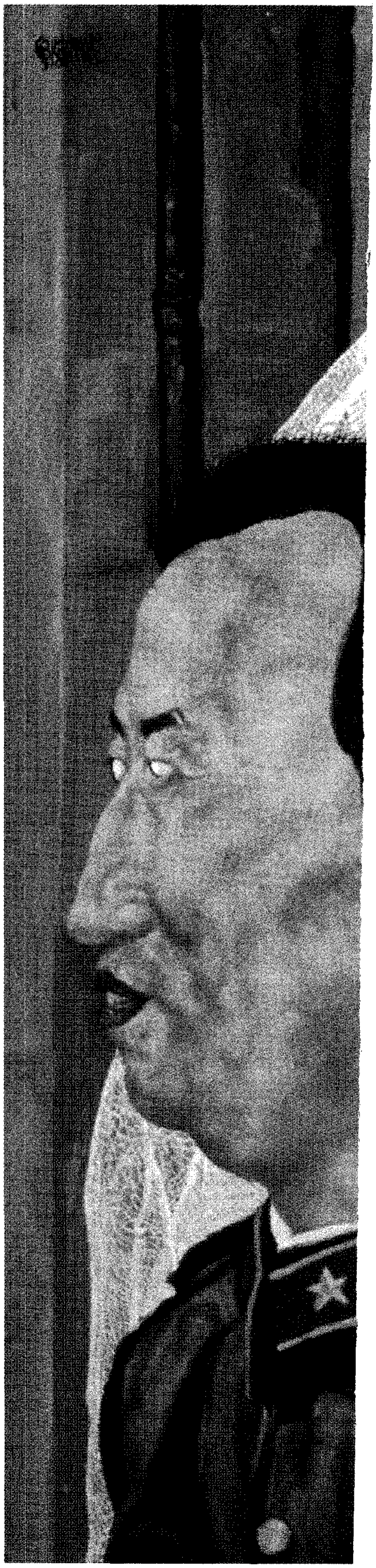
Atlas said Tyson was a fighter who depended solely on fast hands and the image of extreme violence. Nearly all his opponents were beaten before they ever got in the ring. Tyson never fought a truly great heavyweight (as Tunney fought Dempsey, as Ali fought Joe Frazier), and on the two occasions when an opponent stood up to him he lost: first to Buster Douglas in Tokyo in 1990, and then to Holyfield last November.

"You can lie to yourself in the ring in a hundred different ways," Atlas said. "You can quit by degrees. You can stop punching with the idea, crazy as it sounds, that the other guy will stop if you do. Then you can make excuses to yourself, and the people around you will echo the excuses, and everything will seem to be all right. You can even foul and then claim you would have won, given the chance. Remember, this is a kid who used to hide between the walls of condemned buildings to make sure he wouldn't get beaten up. When you live like that, you learn to lie, to coax people that you are the toughest—you learn to scare people, to manipulate them. And when you can't do it you're lost.

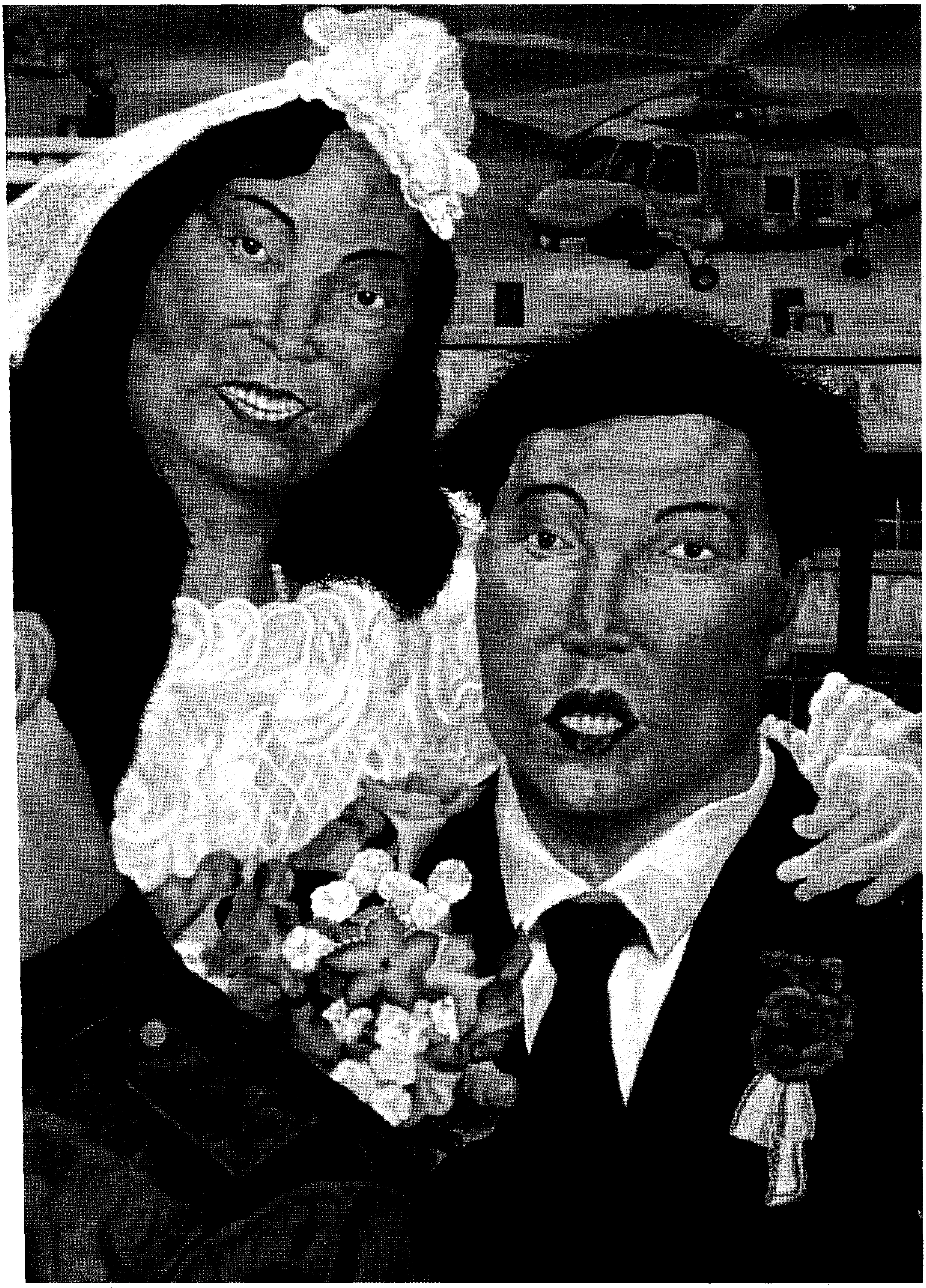
"When I see Tyson, I see a guy who's scared, a guy who can't do it on the up

MAO NOW

In the exhilarating spring of 1989 in Beijing, before the calamity of Tiananmen Square, Chinese art was experiencing a radical reinvention: young painters and sculptors were creating works for the first large-scale avant-garde exhibition since the Communist revolution. After the crackdown, it was back to clumsy depictions of heroic factory workers; progressive artists either went underground or dispersed, to Hong Kong, Taiwan, and points farther flung. "New Art in China, Post-1989," an exhibition currently on view at the Chicago Cultural Center, reveals that the idealism of the eighties has become tinged with a pervasive irony and cynicism. The show juxtaposes satirical images of Mao, stinging send-ups of the consumer culture, and unsettling vignettes of wasted youth. Liu Wei's oil painting "Bride and Groom with Dad" (1991) mordantly captures the distance between the generations as well as the discomfort of a society in transition: that Western garb doesn't fit very well.



EXHIBITION ORGANIZED BY THE HANART TZ GALLERY, HONG KONG, AND THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ARTS



"We both see Ben as this summer's breakout child."

and up. In his world, he was never allowed to be scared, or even honest, and so he is neither of those things. He is lost. When Tyson is alone with himself, I don't know if he believes there is one single person around him who is there because of his merits as a person. I don't even know that the women would be around without his ability to raise money. He'd have to show something independent of the ring and of his ability to send people on two-hundred-thousand-dollar shopping sprees."

On the day of the fight, I wandered the Strip. Earlier in the week, the casinos in hotels like the M-G-M Grand, New York New York, and Excalibur—the new family-friendly places—had been jammed with middle-class parents pushing strollers past the blackjack tables at midnight. Las Vegas is a better deal than Disney World. In Las Vegas, you can get a cheap hotel room, visit the Sphinx (at the Luxor), have your picture taken with a stuffed movie character, induce nausea on the rides, and be in the pool by lunchtime. But at the end of the week (when my room rate shot up from seventy-nine dollars per night to three hundred and ninety-nine) all the strollers were gone. The planes out at McCarran International Airport disgorged high rollers from New York, Tokyo, Taipei, and Beijing, athletes and gang-bangers, movie stars in Armani and hoochie girls in Moschino. The mind reeled—and the neck swivelled—at the effect of health clubs and silicone on the American form at century's end. All that hard work and earnest surgery. From the looks of the women at the luggage belts, there could not have been a single hooker left in the greater Los Angeles area. They had all flown in for the fight.

At the instigation of my friend Michael Wilbon, a sports columnist for the Washington *Post*, I spent the afternoon roaming the most expensive stores in town. Fight day, Wilbon instructed me, is a big shopping day, and many of the key stores—Neiman Marcus, Versace, Escada, Gucci, Armani—signed up extra seamstresses and tailors to get things ready for the evening. You don't buy a three-thousand-dollar suit and then not wear it to the main event. Even if you didn't have tickets—and that meant the vast majority who had "come in for the fight"—you showed up in the casinos looking dowdy at your peril.

At Neiman Marcus, I watched Louis Farrakhan take the Italian boutique by storm. While half a dozen of his bodyguards assumed positions near the ties and the shirt racks, the minister tried on a fine pair of mustard-colored slacks. Zegna is evidently one of his favorite designers. I watched him try on slacks for the better part of half an hour. When I asked one of his guards whether it might be possible to interview him, the guard took off his sunglasses and blinked. I took this to mean no.

The Forum Shops at Caesars Palace proved to be a nice place to hang out, too. The ceilings are painted like a cerulean sky with perfect Biblical clouds, and there is a fountain outside the Versace store that is better than the Trevi Fountain in Rome in that the Las Vegas Rome is air-conditioned.

Versace seemed to be the appointed headquarters of Tyson fans, and even Tyson himself. Before the first Holyfield fight, the managers shut down the store for Tyson. "He bought real good," a manager told me, but he declined to be more specific. The mythical figure among the boxing writers was that Tyson dropped a hundred and fifty thousand there last time. While I was fingering a blouse worth more than a decent used car, a guy with some major forearms and a purposeful stare came in: Tyson's bodyguard. Even if one did not know him by his face, there were hints: a "Team Tyson" tattoo on his arm and a "Team Tyson Rules" bomber jacket. The manager spotted him and raced over to serve. He actually rubbed his palms. Within seconds, the bodyguard was handed a suit bag. "Mike says thanks," the bodyguard said. He used his phone to order "immediate pickup" and walked out.

The fight crowd was not always thus. In the films of the big fights of the fifties and sixties, you can see that the ringside seats were taken up mainly by boxy white men in boxy blue suits—Mob guys, like Blinky Palermo and Frank Carbo, or, on a slightly higher plane, Rat Pack members. When Ali returned from exile in 1971 to fight Jerry Quarry in Atlanta, the fight crowd changed: suddenly, there were blacks at ringside. They held the same reputable and disreputable jobs as their white predecessors, but the plumage was different. The style of the hustler had shifted from Carbo's dour wool (he was known as Mr. Gray) to the iridescent suits of his black inheritors. It was as if a row of sparrows had flown the wire, to be replaced by a flock of cockatoos.

There were still plenty of white big shots around, plenty of pompadours and big-guy rings. One night at dinner at an Italian place, Trevesi, at the M-G-M Grand, a woman tossed her glass of wine at her big-guy boyfriend. Then she rose from her chair and, after a second of real consideration, took her glass and smashed it over the boyfriend's head. At which point there was blood on the boyfriend's skull and slivers of glass in the capellini of the woman at the next table. That would turn out to be the cleanest blow of the week.

IT is customary at a big fight to surround the ring with press people, anonymous high rollers, and, most of all, "luminaries from the world of sports, politics, and the entertainment industry." In the press section, we were handed an alphabetized list of celebrities in attendance: Paul Anka, Patricia Arquette, Stephen Baldwin, Matthew Broderick, Albert Brooks, James Caan, John Cusack, Rodney Dangerfield, Lolita Davidovich, Ellen DeGeneres, Larry Flynt, Michael J. Fox, Cuba Gooding, Jr., etc. This, of course, was "subject to change," the King people warned us.

It is also customary at big fights to come late, to ignore the undercard. But I had seen about as many vermillion leather vests, chartreuse pants, and siliconed bodies as I wanted to see, and headed into the M-G-M Grand's arena. King had told everyone that the fight was "the greatest boxing event of all time." It was a wonder, then, why he put together one of the grimmest undercards of all time. The highlight was surely the one women's bout, which left the canvas spotted with bloody pools. The woman in the pink shorts, Christy Martin, won the match. She had acquired all the best habits of boxing. She taunted her opponent, Andrea DeShong, at the pre-fight press conference, by saying she was glad DeShong had finally worn a dress. "It's the first time I've seen you look respectable, like a woman," Martin said, thus proving her . . . manhood.

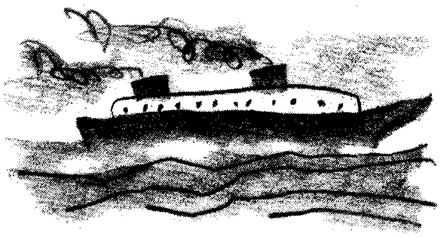
By eight-thirty, the seats were filled and the place buzzed, loud and nervous, a sound peculiar to the mass anticipation of violence, a more manic buzz than at a basketball playoff game or a political convention. Don King opened the proceedings by having the ring announcer tell us that the fight was dedicated to the memory of Dr. Betty Shabazz and to "the many, many innocent victims of crime and violence." We all stood, and the timekeeper sounded the bell ten times, boxing's equivalent of a twenty-one-gun salute.

Tyson, the challenger, came into the arena to the sound of gangsta rap. In the bowels of the arena, he had complained that he could hear Holyfield's music—electric Jesus music—and couldn't Holyfield turn it down? Tyson, as always, wore his warrior look: black trunks, black shoes, no socks. He came surrounded by Giachetti and Horne and Holloway and Crocodile and a dozen other men, all of them strung out on self-importance. They tried very hard to look dangerous.

Then Holyfield, with a far smaller entourage, came down the aisle toward the ring. He wore purple-and-white trunks with the logo "Phil 4:13" ("I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"). While Tyson assumed his death mask, his intimidator's face, Holyfield was smiling. He mouthed the words to a gospel song that only he could hear. Tyson paced, and Holyfield stood in his corner, satisfied to jiggle the muscles in his arms and legs. One of his seconds massaged the ropes of muscle in his neck.

In the casino, Tyson was the favorite. You had to bet a hundred and eighty dollars on him to win a hundred. Those odds were based almost entirely on Tyson's Kid Dynamite reputation. Holyfield, however, was the pick on press row by a wide margin. And yet we knew why we were here. It was not to listen to Holyfield sing "Nearer My God to Thee."

Mills Lane, a bald and mumbly judge from Reno, was the referee. At the center of the ring, Lane reminded both fighters of their obligations to the law, to boxing, and to the Nevada State Athletic Commission, and both men nodded assent. They would, of course, not dream of trespass. So said their quick nods, the touch of the gloves.



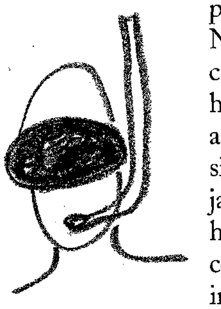
At the opening bell, Tyson came out bobbing and weaving, but with a certain self-conscious air. He had lost the first fight not least because he had forgotten his old defensive moves. For months, Giachetti, his trainer, had been pleading with him to move his head, to jab, to forget about the one-punch knockout. But within half a minute Tyson was back to where he'd been before, throwing one huge hook at a time. Holyfield ducked the hooks easily and then held on, muscling Tyson around the ring. Last time, we had been amazed that Holyfield was stronger than Tyson, that he could push Tyson back on his heels, that he could grab Tyson's left arm in the clinches and save himself untold trauma to the kidneys and the temple. And now it was happening again. All the training, all the instructions were coming to nothing. Tyson could not intimidate Holyfield—he could not, as he had done to so many others before, terrify his man into dropping his guard, into committing a kind of boxing suicide. Holyfield had every intention of winning again, and he took the first round by controlling the pace and scoring big with two left hooks and then a right hand to Tyson's jaw.

Between rounds, as Tyson drank some water and spit in the bucket, Giachetti told him to take his time.

"Jab for the throat!" he said.

Tyson nodded, but who could tell what he was hearing—what inner voice?

In the second round, the pattern was much the same. Holyfield scored left hooks to the meat of Tyson's flank and shoved him around and back toward the ropes. Tyson jabbed occasionally, but more often he threw big, dramatic punches, and Holyfield smothered them, ducked them. Then came the crucial moment of the round—the moment that set off in Tyson some torrent of rage that would, in the end, botch the fight and possibly ruin his career. As the two men wrestled, Holyfield unintentionally rammed his skull into the sharp brow above Tyson's right eye. Within seconds, there were rivulets of blood running down the side of Tyson's face, and in the clinch he looked up at Lane and said, "He butted me." The physical side was bad enough: the gash was sure to bother Tyson throughout the fight. The blood would run in his eyes, and Holyfield, sensing his advantage, would work over the cut—punch at it, grind his head into it in the clinch—and win on a technical knockout. What was worse for Tyson was the tremendous fear the butt stirred up in him, the way the blunt pain on his brow summoned up the last fight, his humiliation. Last time, the two men had butted heads inside, two berserk rams, and Tyson had come away the injured one, dazed and bleeding. It was as if his nightmare had come true. It was all happening again. He was in the ring, bleeding, and facing an opponent who would not back down.



Lane warned both men against excessive "roughhousing" (imagine!), but he didn't deduct any penalty points. Now, in the clinch, Tyson grew more desperate. He shoved a forearm into Holyfield's throat. But his punches, his big punches, were still missing, and they were coming in single volleys rather than in combination. Again, Holyfield won the round because of his superior strength, his ability to waltz Tyson around the ring, and the efficiency of his blows. What he threw, for the most part, landed. All three judges scored the first two rounds for Holyfield, ten to nine.

After the bell, a plastic surgeon worked on Tyson's cut.

As the doctor held a compress to Tyson's brow, the fighter jerked back.

"Aaahhh!" Tyson moaned.

"I'm sorry," the doctor said.

Tyson was breathing hard now—harder than he should have been after six minutes in the ring and months of roadwork. He said nothing. He gave no hint to anyone that something was wrong—that something had "snapped," as he put it days later. Tyson got off his stool and waited for the bell. As the two fighters stood facing each other, Holyfield suddenly pointed to his mouth, reminding Tyson that his corner had not put in his mouthpiece. Tyson walked back to Giachetti and opened his jaws; Giachetti put the mouthpiece in.

At the bell for the third round, Tyson stalked forward, and it was clear that he was enraged, desperate to end the fight before his eye failed him. He was relatively controlled at first, throwing his first sharp hooks of the fight. Holyfield was standing up to the blows and was still moving forward, crowding Tyson, but he was suddenly no longer in command. For more than two minutes of fighting, Tyson showed that he was capable of reviving his old style. Now his punches came in combinations. He kept his head moving, side to side, up and down, making it impossible for Holyfield to flick the jab at his gash. In the clinches, however, Holyfield was still in control. He seemed to be telling Tyson that, while he could win the round, he could not win the fight, and Tyson seemed to see the sense in that. And with about forty seconds left in the round, as Holyfield was steering him around the center of the ring, Tyson suddenly spit out his mouthpiece and started gnawing on Holyfield's right ear. For a second, Holyfield seemed not to feel this lunatic attack, but then the sting hit him. He backed away, jumping up and down, pointing to his ear and the blood that now bathed it. At the same time, Tyson turned his head at an angle and spit out a half-inch chunk of ear. Lane called a time-out. Holyfield headed for his corner. Tyson chased him down and shoved him. Holyfield seemed almost to ham it up, to bounce crazily on the ropes, as if to highlight the madness of it all.

Don Turner, Holyfield's trainer, told his man to keep cool, to think about Jesus, just stay calm.

Lane said to a Nevada State Athletic Commission official at ringside that he was ready to disqualify Tyson—and he certainly would have been within his rights to do so—but first he invited the ring doctor, Flip Homansky, onto the canvas to have a look at Holyfield's ear. Homansky gravely inspected the ear and, presumably in the interests of Nevada and boxing's good name, pronounced Holyfield able to continue. Lane went to both corners and explained to the assembled handlers what had happened. He told Giachetti that Tyson "bit him on the ear."

"No, I didn't," Tyson said.

"Bullshit," Lane replied. He had already examined the ear, the teeth marks. "I thought my ear had fallen off!" Holyfield said later. "Blood was all over!" Lane deducted two points from Tyson—one for the bite, one for the shove—and, or so he claimed in a post-fight interview, warned Tyson that if he did it again the fight was over.

The time-out had lasted more than two minutes, long enough for the crowd to see replays of the incident on the big screens around the arena and start booing, enough time for Tyson to decide if he had "snapped" or would do it again, and more than enough time for the jokes to begin sweeping through the press section: "Tyson's a chomp," "He's Hannibal Lecter," "a lobe blow," "pay per chew," "If you can't beat 'em, eat 'em." There would be a hundred of them.

Finally, Lane cleared the ring and resumed what little was left of the third round. The crowd, which had been fickle, swerving between chants first for Holyfield, then for Tyson, was now greatly affronted. They booed wildly. We were, of course, all prepared to see one fighter deliver a subconcussive blow to the other's brain, but a bite on the ear was beyond imagining. We were offended, disgusted, perhaps even a little thrilled. Boxing is a blood sport. Now there was blood.

Holyfield was intent on following his corner's plea to keep his cool. He marched in and connected with a stiff hook to Tyson's face. His message was delivered thus: You can do what you want, you can foul, you can threaten, you can even quit, but you will not intimidate me.

The fighters clinched again. There were about twenty seconds left in the round. And, incredibly, Tyson once more nuzzled his way into Holyfield's sweaty neck, almost tenderly, purposefully, as if he were snuffling for truffles. He found the left ear and bit. Once more, Holyfield did his jumping dance of rage and pain. The bell sounded.

Tyson's handlers now wore guilty looks; their eyes shifted. They knew what was coming.

Holyfield was not quite so sure. "Put my mouthpiece in," he told his cornermen. "I'm gonna knock him out."

But Lane could not let this go on:

"One bite is bad enough. Two bites is the end of the search."

"I had to do some thinking," Lane said, reasonably, later on. "I thought about it and thought about it, and decided it was the right thing to do. Let the chips fall where they may." Tyson was disqualified. Holyfield was declared winner and "still heavyweight champion of the world." Subsequently, Tyson said that he had been forced to retaliate for the butt in the second round. After all, he said righteously, "This is my career. . . . I've got children to raise."

In the mayhem that followed Lane's announcement—Tyson still going berserk in the ring, pushing at the police, and then fans raining down ice cubes and curses as he headed for the locker room—in all that, one bit of business was almost forgotten. A hotel employee named Mitch Libonati found the chunk of ear that belonged to Evander Holyfield. He found it on the ring mat, wrapped it in a rubber glove, and delivered it to the champion's locker room.

"At first, they looked at me like I was pulling a prank, but I told them I had a piece of Evander's ear, and I thought he would want it," Libonati said. "It wasn't really bloody, actually. It was like a piece of sausage."

AFTER leaving the arena and the press tent, I walked through the M-G-M Grand casino toward the elevators. I wanted to drop off some things in my room before heading back out to the Strip. How could one miss the victory parties? But just as I was passing some slot machines I saw a stampede of twenty or thirty people running straight at me. There were screams: "Get down!" and "There's shooting!" and "They got guns!" I had already seen some fistfights between Tyson's fans and Holyfield's fans. It was not beyond reckoning that some of the visitors could be armed. I dived behind a bank of slot machines, feeling at once terrified and ridiculous.

"Keep down!"

"Ya hear the shots!"

People were face down on the carpet, ducking under blackjack tables, roulette tables. And then it was quiet. No shots—not that we could hear, anyway. It seemed safe to walk to the elevators.

But then, as the doors opened, more people started dashing around, ducking behind slot machines and into the elevators. I went up to the fourteenth floor and then went back down in a service elevator. I had to get to the bank of elevators that would get me to the twenty-fifth floor. As I was getting out of the service elevator, Jesse Jackson and a team of police were getting in.

"It's sad. The whole thing is sad," Jackson said. "That's the one word I can think of to describe it. It's a tragedy that no one can explain. As far as Tyson is concerned, I guess the butting triggered something in him. I focus on him and what's going on in his head. And now this. They're out there shooting with Uzis, these bad boys."

It was never entirely clear whether there had been any shooting. I doubt it. But the Nevada Highway Patrol did shut down the Strip from Tropicana Avenue to Koval Lane. No one wanted a repeat of the action after the Tyson-Seldon fight last September, when the rap star Tupac Shakur was shot to death in a car.

The rumors of Uzi fire did little to help the gambling receipts at the M-G-M Grand, but elsewhere on the Strip the high rollers were happy. We had all been witness to a spectacle—to the unraveling of Mike Tyson. In the days to come, he would apologize. He would reach out "to the medical professionals for help." But who now cared about him? In the ring, at his moment of greatest pressure, he had lost everything: he had proved himself to be what in gentler times would have been called a bum. Biting is certainly not unheard of in boxing—Holyfield himself once bit Jakey Winters in an amateur bout when he was eighteen—yet Tyson had done it not once but twice, in a championship fight seen by "three billion people," or however many Don King had managed to attract. The abysmal and lonely end that he had seemed to predict for himself had come so soon.

"It's over," he said in the locker room. "I know it's over. My career is over."

No one had envisioned this end more clearly than Tyson himself. On the day before the fight, he had gone out to a cemetery near the airport and laid a bouquet of flowers on the grave of Sonny Liston. The music ahead for Tyson would be not rap but something more mournful. "Someday they're gonna write a blues song just for fighters," his role model, Liston, once said. "It'll be for slow guitar, soft trumpet, and a bell." ♦

"I'll have a light beer, the house salad, the salmon, and the belly button."

CULTURAL PURSUITS

BIG POETRY

Why Jorie Graham is the most celebrated American poet of her generation.

BY STEPHEN SCHIFF

To accompany Jorie Graham through the streets and schoolyards and bookstores of Iowa City—especially the bookstores—is to glimpse what it might have been like to join a benevolent feudal noble on a survey of her fiefdom. Swathed in black from head to foot, with enough bracelets and necklaces and rings to herniate a belly dancer, she is greeted everywhere with soft regard and tender, almost obeisant nods—and why not? Iowa City is known chiefly for the production of great corn and even greater writers, and, among the latter, Graham is the reigning queen.

She is the winner of last year's Pulitzer Prize for poetry. With her husband, James Galvin, and the poet Marvin Bell, she runs the poetry division of the celebrated Writers' Workshop at the University of Iowa. And, at forty-seven, she still looks the way a testosterone-flushed sophomore might dream a lady poet ought to look: she has wide, appraising eyes; a serene forehead and a mouth that verges on a pout; and, above and around and all over the place, masses of glistening dark hair, which she rakes with her fingers as she talks. And talks. Graham is a champion talker, able to wade deep into a complicated sentence, fish out every conceivable association, and then tromp back, leaving grammar and syntax quivering yet still upright in her wake. Colleagues as diverse as the poet Mark Strand and the writer Frank Conroy have said to me, in exactly the same words, "I think she's a genius." In fact, she would very likely have excelled at almost anything she put her mind to. But she has put her mind to poetry. And that is why most well-read, well-educated Americans have never heard of her.

True, poetry in America is said to be on the rise; it has been sighted on public television and in the boîtes of lower Manhattan. But Jorie Graham's poetry will never be an offshoot of popular culture. It's too hard to get. It has appeared in most of the good magazines that publish poetry, and it has often looked terrifying there, with its long, racing lines, its flocks of ungainly gerunds, its peculiar ellipses and italics, its rushes of frustrated language culminating in a final, winded "—"

Typically, Graham's poems begin with a mundane incident or observation (she brings her daughter a forgotten leotard; she finds two juncos trapped in her house; she examines a painting or reëxamines a myth) and then go shooting off into heady realms of metaphysical questioning. In a poem called "Salmon," from her second book, she compares salmon leaping against the river's current to a childhood memory of watching two lovers—"two gold currents"—toiling against each other:

As far as I could tell, the work they did
with sweat and light
was good. I'd say
they traveled far in opposite
directions. What is the light
at the end of the day, deep, reddish-
    gold, bathing the walls,
the corridors, light that is no longer
    light, no longer clarifies,
illuminates, antique, freed from the
    body of
the air that carries it. What is it
for the space of time
where it is useless, merely
beautiful?

Lines like these have a surface lustre that can draw a reader in, but Graham's later poems have grown gnarled and thorny: they second-guess and repudiate themselves; they stutter and halt; they look less like conventional descriptions of things than like spidery maps of thought it-

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEANNETTE MONTGOMERY BARRON

Graham at home in Iowa City.

self. Reading her new collection, "The Errancy," which has just been published by the Ecco Press, is like taking a plunge into a surging river: Her rhythms are a little too fast and a little too powerful; there are times when the current sucks you under and you feel yourself struggling for air. And yet the exhilaration of the ride is undeniable.

"She writes big poetry," her friend Mark Strand told me. "It's so dense and so crowded with thinking. Too many poets write a kind of chatter, and after you've finished the poem you feel you know everything this person is going to say for the next ten years—the little hurts they've suffered and the little hurts their grandparents have suffered. American poetry is full of 'Oh, poor me.' Jorie doesn't do that. I think she's carved out such a powerful œuvre that it's unignorable."

Even as her work has grown more demanding, her stature has increased. Besides the Pulitzer (for her 1995 selection, "The Dream of the Unified Field"), she has received a fellowship from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; a Morton Dauwen Zabel Award, from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters; and various Guggenheim and Whiting and N.E.A. grants. Last week, she was named one of the twelve chancellors of the Academy of American Poets. These are the sorts of accomplishments that can make one a very large target in the tiny world of American poetry—a world as fractious and as riven as any Trotskyist cell. "Jorie has received a MacArthur award, which is a very grand affair, as I now have reason to discover," the influential poet Richard Howard told me—he, too, has won a MacArthur, and, in 1970, a Pulitzer as well. "It leads to a kind of modishness, a kind of overvaluation of the work as 'This is what advanced poetry might be.' "

THAT GREATER THAN WHICH NOTHING

Even the plenitude is tired of the magnanimous, disciplined, beached eye in
its thrall. Even the accuracy
is tired—the assimilation tired—
of entering the mind.
The reader is tired.
I am so very tired.
Who will this worry henceforth—radiant striation of hall light on pillowcase—
who will receive it—
couch, table, half-open drawer, the granulated dark in it,
the cup, the three glasses—stupefying promises we are supposed to receive—
The glance? braiding and braiding the many promises of vision?
The glance, however exiled, wanting nonetheless only to come full-term
into the absolute
orphanhood. *Do you really want to die*?
Do you not maybe want to *sleep it off*, this time, again?
Nothing moves but the cloth as you breathe.
Don't look up at the four corners—the four conquering corners—

Those who find her rise suspicious tend also to take umbrage at her background. She is not a wealthy woman—she lives on grants and the earnings of a professorship—but she came from a glamorous family, married into an even more glamorous one, and then, like some storm-tossed gothic heroine, broke away from it all to become a Poet. Her father is the former *Newsweek* correspondent Curtis (Bill) Pepper, and her mother is the controversial sculptor (and social steamroller) Beverly Pepper. "Jorie is an amalgam of the two," one New York editor told me. "She has the driven, generous, networking part of her mother and the watchful, note-taking quality of her father." In 1973, Jorie married her childhood friend Bill Graham, who is the third of the four children of Katharine and the late Philip Graham, the owners of *Newsweek* and the Washington *Post*. The marriage would last only until 1977, but those were the years of Watergate, the years in which the Grahams' newspaper emerged as one of the foremost journalistic forces in the country. At Jorie's wedding, Ted Kennedy escorted her around the room, telling her who was who; a photograph from the occasion shows her conversing with a plainly dazzled Robert McNamara.

She has also been elaborately championed by the most powerful poetry critic in America, the Harvard professor Helen Vendler, whose ardently argued views sometimes baffle those who don't share them. Vendler and Graham have become friends, and Graham sometimes seeks out Vendler's response to her poems before publishing them. None of this pleases the anti-Graham factions. "I think Helen's response is entirely genuine, but she's overblown Jorie Graham's achievement to the point where it irritates or provokes resistance," Richard Howard told me. Another poet was even more pointed on the subject: "I just think it's really kind of disgraceful. Jorie Graham is extremely courting of people who can be useful to her, extremely flattering. She keeps all her little networks in very good repair—other poets, older poets, people in a position to do her good. If I liked her poems, if I even understood her poems, I wouldn't mind."

Graham doesn't believe that her poems are difficult to understand. "They are intended to be clear," she told me when I visited her in Iowa City. "I don't use difficult vocabulary. If the poem is working, you should be able to get every image. Where the poems are difficult is in how they move. Why, when I was there, did I then go here? And those are difficulties that say to the reader, 'Your normal reading habits, which have to do with the follow-through of plot, aren't going to work here. So let's let go and see what else we can read with.' "

Graham views poetry not as a way of depicting the world but as a way of conversing with it, trying to know it. But knowing is not easy. One of her later poems, "Opulence," is a record of her attempt to come to terms with an amaryllis: she takes a stab at describing it; it resists description; she stabs again; it

for the shape of mercy. It swarms.
It composes gray-eyed walls on which the trapped light plays
like fumes off
kerosene—light, light everywhere, beckoning with its epic self-
sameness—
all round you, roaming, rough in your shoulders, sparkling,
regrouping—grain by grain, no oases, no conversation—
asking each granulated breath your deep sleep
blossoms
to yield to it, to marry up—
and other dimensions—sandy, windy—exact—unincarnate—
tireless dimensions—
metamorphic yet unpliant—
now sparkling, sparkling—it's the light, you can't keep it out,
Room 363,
its century of wide-eyed wing work splashing
hither and hither like graffiti
over the featurelessness—distending—distending the nature of
the erasure—merciless in its lightheartedness

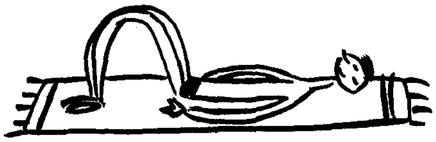
in which the living is forgotten to be living—

—JORIE GRAHAM

makes a fool of her; she tries again. "You start out with a blank piece of paper," she told me. "But it starts turning into silence, and the silence feels like it's in conversation with you. The silence comes in and says, 'But how about this?' And, 'I don't believe what you're saying.' And it goes, 'Uh-uh. Try again.' And to me that's a religious experience. The people who believe that you can finish up the poem and you're let right in and you have a nice epiphany at the end—they're not the poets for me. The poets for me are the raging, passionate, doubting believers—Crane and Hopkins and Berryman and Dickinson and Donne and Stevens. But this comes back to something that I'll tell you about as soon as we're done with this ten-minute interruption."

OUR conversation had already been interrupted by a large dog named Cesca, and also by the continual whirr of a nearby telephone. None of this had commanded Graham's attention, but now her thirteen-year-old daughter, Emily, did. Emily had written a play; it was going to be performed; there were dinner plans to be made and car pools to be sorted out. We were sitting in the living room of the family's two-story house, in Iowa City; on the floor were fine kilims and on the walls were Amish quilts, and outside was a leafy street that appeared to be Anytown, U.S.A., but wasn't, really, because the neighborhood was crawling with famous writers: Frank Conroy, the author of "Stop-Time," lived down the block, and so did Marilynne Robinson (whose novels include "Housekeeping"); the poet Donald Justice had a house around the corner. Presently the poet upstairs—Graham's husband, James Galvin—descended from his attic office, with a wary look that I soon learned to recognize as characteristic. Reared in southern Wyoming, Galvin is as much a cowboy as his wife is a cosmopolitan. He is the author of four volumes of poems, but is best known for "The Meadow," an account of life in the Wyoming high country, where he prefers to spend his time—and where, from May through August every year, Jorie and Emily join him. (Their house there, which Galvin built, has no electricity, no running water, no telephone, and no mail service.)

Galvin is taciturn and wiry, with high, pronounced cheekbones, scraggly teeth, and a bow in the legs. When Jorie talks to him in her pell-mell fashion, he sometimes freezes, standing stock-still and looking away from her, as if steeling himself to absorb the onslaught without being toppled by it. He is all Buddhistic simplicity, silence, directness; she is urban verbiage, multiplicity, tumult. Emily, for her part, is adept both at riding horses and at quoting Shakespeare. As she left with Galvin, she nodded formally to her mother. "It shall be called 'Bottom's Dream,' because it hath no bottom," Emily said.



Graham shook her head, turned to me, and said, "She is something."

GRAHAM is what these days might be called a proactive mother: she has arranged special classes for Emily and her friends, not just in Shakespeare but also in Latin and in science. She is also an uncommonly energetic teacher. For her workshop students there is no bigger event than the final thesis conference, in which she goes over their work and tells them, by means of it, who they are. (This epiphany is known on campus as the Jorgasm.) She is a nearly fanatical proselytizer for poetry. In the classroom, she exposes her students to every poetic faction: the traditionalists, who insist on rhyme and metre; the language poets, whose sometimes opaque work attempts to deconstruct language itself in the belief that it is a coded tool of the power élite; the descendants of Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, and Robert Creeley, who approach the phenomenal world as reticently as possible; and Graham's own idols and forebears—among them Traherne, Milton, Eliot, Bishop, and Ashbery—who resort to a more ornate language and a disordered syntax. Adopting a term from the alchemists, Graham calls their approach "the path of the left hand," and explains, "It's the only way some of us feel you can crack the surface illusion and get inside."

She is also, it must be said, one of Iowa City's great eccentrics. Her costume of scarves, jewelry, and black velvet everything is unvarying to a fault: she wears it even to plant tulip bulbs at dawn. Her tendency to write and read poetry while driving a car has been noted by members of the local constabulary. And from time to time her friends have found her, in the words of one, "quite exhausting to talk to."

"There is no scale to her enthusiasms," Marilynne Robinson told me. "It's funny to have Jorie walk through one's life with one. If she buys some wretched little plant and it puts out a wretched little blossom, it's a miracle! When you go shopping with her, the most ordinary thing in the world seems to bulge out at her. Everything means more than you would have realized it means. Her loyalty is absolute to whatever her attention is falling on at any particular moment."

AFTER the ten-minute interruption, Graham began to talk about the neighborhood she grew up in: Trastevere, in the old part of Rome, where there were more churches than shops. The churches were where her Brooklyn Jewish mother would come to point out, in too loud a voice, the majesty of the frescoes, and where her Irish-American Southern Catholic father would shush everyone, because a Mass was going on. Most of all, they were great places to play hide-and-seek. "Adults were coming in with their griefs, and tourists were coming in trying to find a new life," she said. "And there I was, hiding and watching people and seeing that something was hidden in them. And I think that was the beginning of poetry for me. I think I ended up finding in poetry a middle ground between the secular and the sacred."

You get a sense of this in "The Guardian Angel of the Little Utopia," the opening poem of her new book. The narrator sits in an upstairs room, looking out at a yellow sky and trying to compose a poem while a noisy party rages downstairs:

> how small they seem from here,
> the bobbing universal heads, stuffing
> the void with
>
> eloquence . . .
>
> I'm a bit
> dizzy up here rearranging things,
> they will come up here soon, and
> need a setting for
>
> their fears,
> and loves . . .

The poem is about the uneasy relationship of the poet—"rearranging" experience—to the experience itself, but its source is Graham's childhood: not just her hiding in the churches but her habit of secreting herself in her room during her parents' parties—parties that were, at the time, the talk of Rome. Beverly Pepper was a skilled cook and a stylish entertainer. At her soirées, new money and old would mingle with Clare Boothe Luce and Alice B. Toklas, with the Black Nobility, which is to say the princes of the Catholic Church, and with the filmmakers and stars of the "dolce vita" era—Fellini, Antonioni, Monica Vitti, Marcello Mastroianni. "I would be dragged in and introduced," Graham said. "And then I would flee to my room. And I had this very acute sense, again from the hiding place, of listening to adults."

At seventeen, she went from the French lycée in Rome to the Sorbonne, in Paris. (At around the same time, her parents were moving to Todi, in the hill country of Umbria; there they became the center of a new society of glamorous expatriates—so much so that the region came to be known as Beverly's Hills.) Jorie had already developed what would prove to be a formidable knack for riding the Zeitgeist without getting bucked off. In 1968, she was a classmate of Daniel Cohn-Bendit, who became a leader, that May, of the demonstrations that eventuated in the collapse of the de Gaulle Presidency. She was caught up in the mayhem, but she was half sansculotte, half ruffles and lace. Her parents had arranged for her to live in the house of Comte Alain de la Falaise (the father of Yves Saint Laurent's renowned muse, Loulou de la Falaise). "I'd get arrested and witness appalling things," she told me. "And then I'd go to the Comte de la Falaise's house and change my clothes and put on a hat, and he'd take me to the Jockey Club. It was so strange."

After May, 1968, the French government expelled some of the foreign students who had taken part in the demonstrations, and Jorie was among them. She was at a loss—though, as ever, not for long. As a teen-ager, she had done some research for Antonioni while he was preparing his film "Zabriskie Point," and the process had fascinated her. In 1969, she enrolled in the film school at New York University, and there her story took on an almost fabulist aura. "One day, I was looking for some new editing room and I ended up in the wrong hallway and I heard these lines of Eliot's flowing out of this doorway—'I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each. / I do not think that they will sing to me.' And I just went into this huge, long classroom and sat and listened. I had never heard poetry in English before. It was like something being played in the key my soul recognized."

Her conversion experience may sound like a grad student's conceit, but Graham was in earnest. She was in earnest about a lot of things. She began to study English poetry, and she also threw herself into campus politics. She fell in with the S.D.S., marched on Washington, got tear-gassed, and began to doubt her suitability for filmmaking. She married a Harvard tennis star and writer named Martin Flusser and divorced him.

Then, on a trip to Los Angeles, she rediscovered Bill Graham. They were married in 1973 and, in August of that year, moved into Katharine Graham's house in Washington. Once again, Jorie's timing was impeccable. "It was the Watergate period," she told me. "Every night around the dinner table there were these incredible moral discussions that could have been straight out of Sophocles—about what is the duty of an individual, what is the duty of an institution to its country." Steve Graham, Bill's younger brother (and part owner now of Jorie's publisher, the Ecco Press), remembers her as being "preternaturally articulate and direct—from her parents she had learned the art of telling a good story and being able to size up a social situation and make things go."

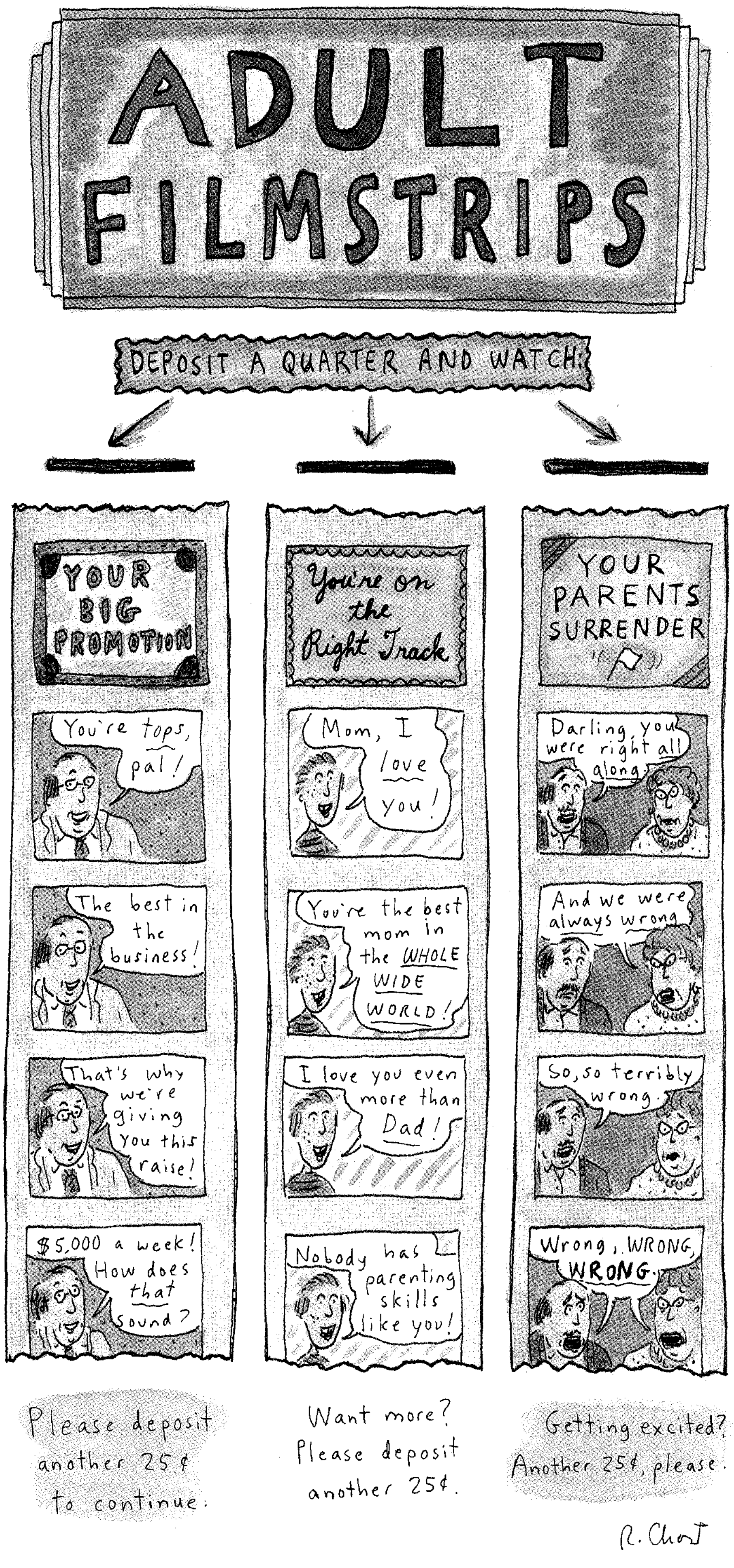
In 1976, Jorie and Bill moved to Los Angeles, where Bill took up work as a public defender. Jorie, meanwhile, began to come apart. "Why shouldn't I have been happy with this great marriage, wonderful house, trying to have a baby?" she said. "It just all looked as if it were supposed to be fine, except there was this hollow. And I knew what was missing. The first time I encountered the act of writing poetry, which means the first time I managed to make contact with something that I didn't know before and could only discover by the act of writing the poem—that experience was so intoxicating that I was willing to give up everything in life to have it again."

She enrolled in the Writers' Workshop at the University of Iowa and began commuting there, leaving Los Angeles every Monday and returning every Wednesday night. In Iowa City, she had a two-room apartment with green plastic furniture and cockroaches, and she insists that she loved it. "It was just really this bedrock democracy," she said. "You walked into that classroom, and what really mattered was who got struck by lightning that day and wrote a good line. To the left and right of me were people who didn't know where the next rent check was coming from, and I was getting a fat check from home. I really felt an impostor. But I needed what I was getting at Iowa. Bill felt that he was losing me to it—had we been older, he might have known that he wasn't losing me to it, I was finding myself in it. But that doesn't happen in a marriage. In a marriage, you say, 'If you walk out the door, that's it.' "

After her marriage to Bill Graham ended, she fell in love with Galvin, who was a year ahead of her at the Writers' Workshop. Very quickly, he introduced her to his world—the world of rural Wyoming. And there she met Galvin's mentor (and the hero of "The Meadow"), Lyle Van Waning, who impressed her by being so much a part of the natural world that, according to Graham, coyotes would walk right up to him and wild birds would eat from his hand. Graham says that Van Waning taught her how to wait for the world to disclose itself to her instead of pouncing upon it with names and thoughts and metaphors. And that lesson became the central theme of her work.

It is already there in the first slim volume that Graham published, in 1980. "Hybrids of Plants and of Ghosts" takes its title from one of Nietzsche's descriptions of man; the poems in it are gentle and crystalline, written in a careful free verse reminiscent of the work of Louise Glück. But it wasn't until literary magazines began publishing the poems that would make up her second book, "Erosion" (published in 1983), that she began to attract widespread notice. Helen Vendler met her then: Graham had received a Bunting Institute fellowship, at Radcliffe, and a friend had taken her to sit in on one of Vendler's classes. After two weeks, Graham disappeared; she had been in a serious car accident. "But then she came to class with these stitched-up scars on her face," Vendler told me. "And I thought, How extraordinary, because most women would hide, with such big red stitches and lumps and scars. She just sailed serenely on. I quite admired that."

Vendler admired Graham's poetry as well, but she insisted to me that she was not the force behind Graham's rise. "I can't talk about the deliberations that I've been on, but she has won many prizes with which I have had nothing to do," she said. "No one critic alone can make anything happen. Nobody's giving her a prize because I reviewed her. There has to be some kind of convergence. All of these poets who liked her work, whether it's


ADULT FILMSTRIPS
DEPOSIT A QUARTER AND WATCH:
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You're tops, pal!
The best in the business!
That's why we're giving you this raise!
$5,000 a week! How does that sound?
You're on the Right Track
Mom, I love you!
You're the best mom in the WHOLE WIDE WORLD!
I love you even more than Dad!
Nobody has parenting skills like you!
YOUR PARENTS SURRENDER
Darling, you were right all along.
And we were always wrong.
So, so terribly wrong.
Wrong, WRONG, WRONG.
Please deposit another 25¢ to continue.
Want more? Please deposit another 25¢.
Getting excited? Another 25¢, please.
R. Chast

"And please stop referring to me as your main man."

• •

John Ashbery or Charles Wright or James Tate—they were liking it because it was good work."

The "Erosion" poems had a stately carriage, which was heightened by the way they were laid out on the page. They took one measured step at a time and then hesitated before taking the next step; they moved the way a procession moves through a church—left, right, left, right. In a poem called "San Sepolcro," Graham examined Piero della Francesca's painting "Madonna del Parto," in which, moments before the birth of Jesus, the Madonna parts the heavy blue dress that conceals her pregnancy:

> Inside, at the heart,
> is tragedy, the present moment
> forever stillborn,
> but going in, each breath
> is a button
>
> coming undone, something terribly
> nimble-fingered
> finding all of the stops.

In her third book, "The End of Beauty" (1987), Graham turned her attention to a series of myths—Orpheus and Eurydice, Apollo and Daphne, Demeter and Persephone, and, most important, Adam and Eve. The poem that sets the book's tone is called "Self-Portrait as the Gesture Between Them (Adam and Eve)"; in it Graham isolates a single moment—the moment in which Eve rips the apple off the Tree of Knowledge and proffers it to Adam—and slows it down as if it were a football pass subjected to instant replay. Each moment is numbered:

> 1
> The gesture like a fruit torn from a limb, torn swiftly.
>
> 2
> The whole bough bending then springing back as if from sudden sight.
>
> 3
> The rip in the fabric where the action begins, the opening of the narrow passage.

The "action" that begins there is what Graham calls "history"—the movement of Adam and Eve from the animal purity of Eden into something terribly human.

By now, she was reaching beyond the processional rhythms of her previous books. The world of "The End of Beauty" was neither shapely nor controlled, and a controlled, shapely line, with its implication of neatness and closure, could have seemed inappropriate. Instead, her lines broke free and went galloping toward the margins of the page. In her next book, "Region of Unlikeness," published in 1991, Graham examined her own personal history in the light of the larger History that had begun to obsess her, but the two fitted together uncomfortably. In this collection and the next one, "Materialism," which she published in 1993, her detractors found much to dislike. Some of the less persuasive poems, for instance, attempted to digest large historical issues in personal terms. "There was a kind of strange equivalence in one of the poems in that last book between the death of her dog and the death camps," Richard Howard told me. "And that was very troubling to me. I find the recent work exceeds my capacity to relate it to experience. Verbally she has gone beyond my grasp."

But in much of "Materialism," and in "The Errancy" as well, Graham has left autobiography behind in favor of something new: the notion that we construct ourselves out of the stuff we take in through our senses. And there is in that idea an implied ethic—that there are better ways and worse ways to manage the stuff we take in. At the end of the poem called "The Dream of the Unified Field," Graham includes a rewritten section of the diary of Christopher Columbus, and for her this passage is like a flow chart of that grabby, acquisitive taking-in that she calls imperialism. As Eve came upon the apple, so Columbus comes upon a harbor, "in a sudden blinding snow." In naming that harbor, he has already trespassed on the purity of the place, but it is a small trespass. His men capture three young Indian women, only to release them; one could still say that no lasting harm has been done. But the poem ends on an ominous note: Columbus has caught sight of a "piece of gold" on the nose of one of the women and now he realizes that there is wealth to be had in the new land. The poem ends with one of Graham's signature "—"s, but we know what rapacity must follow.

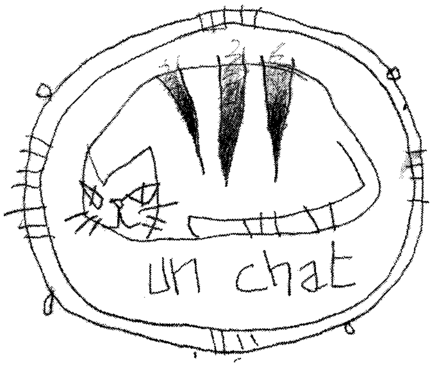
SITTING in Graham's living room one afternoon, I asked her how she might go about developing a poem. "First of all," she said, "there's a lot of despair and thinking I'm never going to write anything again and self-hatred and tears that every poet will tell you about. But then there's a little something that comes through. The way sunlight is striking the snow—it's almost always a sense perception of some kind. Then I just wait. Some other physical things maybe stick to it. Maybe the sun on the snow, and then, the next day, the bright sound of—I don't know, I've never written this poem, so I'm just making this up—but of a crow in an empty winter tree snapping a twig. That brightness and that sharpness. And that sort of sticks, because there's a sound element to that image. And then, I don't know . . ."

She stopped and pulled a thick sheet of hair from the front of one shoulder to the back. "Then maybe I see something on the news," she went on. "And there's a big black bird hovering in the background of a photograph of some killing field. The cleanliness of the sun on the snow and then the snapping of the twig and now the killing field with the indifferent bird in it, the way in which the world of the bird and the world of the people massacring each other do not intersect, they're just coexisting. But then I start going back up to the sun and the snow. I start moving things around each other. And I wait for something else to come into the frame—maybe something I'm reading. All that stuff is percolating, and I'm looking for a crack in my life where I could actually write a poem. I mean, I'm teaching and I'm picking Emily up, taking her to Latin classes, I'm cooking, you know—I'm a full-time wife and mother. And then, one day, there's an opening, and I start going for a voice or a rhythm."

During the time I spent with Graham, I kept waiting for the appearance of the still, contemplative poet, the woman who could sit before the silent page and wait for the sun on the snow to speak. I never saw her. When I ventured down the street to talk to Frank Conroy about her, she accompanied me, her heels clacking on the sidewalk; she introduced Conroy with all the chatty aplomb of a talk-show host, left for a decent interval, and then returned, with pizza. She is forever jetting from city to city, lecturing, giving readings, plumping for poetry. (To watch her read is to watch a master: she has a husky voice, the practiced cadence of an evangelist, and a stirring way of glancing up from the page to peer searchingly into the balcony.)

Yet along with the high-gear performance comes excruciating performance anxiety. An appearance on PBS's "NewsHour with Jim Lehrer" after she was awarded the Pulitzer Prize was preceded by fits of fear and loathing worthy of Kierkegaard. Her critics often complain that her poetry is cool and dispassionate, and, indeed, her surfaces, for all her headlong momentum, maintain a regal reserve. But underneath those surfaces something roils, and that seems true of Graham herself. Her friends talk as much about her inky depressions as about her gusto, and she can get personally worked up over events that others take in stride. When Newt Gingrich became the Speaker of the House in 1994, many people were alarmed, but, according to Frank Conroy, "she was really distraught for a couple of days—I mean seriously distraught."

On the walls of Graham's kitchen, there are pieces of paper with very simple pencil drawings on them—drawings of squash and lemons. They are finely done, and at first I mistook them for works by her mother, who was a painter before she was a sculptor. But the sketches are Graham's. "I draw to make myself try to keep the act of looking physical—bodily," she explained. "So you're not looking with your brain, you're looking with your body, to get it." It occurred to me then that there is an almost puritan quality to Graham's enterprise. In order to reach the sort of quiet and openness that her husband, for instance, may arrive at quite directly, she has to battle her own natural rhythms. For her, poetry isn't the work of inspiration; it is an act of discipline. "You have to understand, I'm not the greatest fan of my own work," she explained. "I just believe in the process—not necessarily the results of that process."



Helen Vendler believes in the results. "She *is* hard," Vendler told me. "And she's not playing certain welcome tunes. She expects you to be as rapid as she is. Now, I am not as rapid as she is, and the first time I read one of her poems I think, What? What? It takes a while for a book to sink in. I mean, it took 'Harmonium' "—Wallace Stevens's first book—"about forty years to sink in."

And yet Graham is very much of her time. In "The Errancy" alone we confront such contemporary but unpoetic images as traffic jams, kids hanging around a parking lot, someone collapsing on a street wearing a medical necklace, a woman being raped in front of her child—all this along with the traditional daffodils and rivers and storms. Graham speaks to a moment in history when all the old ways of making sense seem to have failed. In her poems there are no shibboleths or systems or religions to fall back on: there are only the perceiver and the perceived—and the need to perceive more. Helen Vendler put it this way: "If I was asked who most dragged down the invisible into the visible in this century, she would be one of the people."

Toward the end of my stay in Iowa City, I arrived at Graham's house a little late, and I found her crouched in her front-yard flower beds, stabbing at them with a trowel. She was wearing her black velvet pants, and their hems were already a mess; a scarf, which she had draped across her shoulders, grazed the loam. "I had a few minutes, so I thought I'd plant some bulbs," she said, with a grin that told me she knew she might be taken for a madwoman but that a little thing like that wouldn't stop her.

In a poem called "The Visible World" she struggles to understand the intersecting actions of her hands planting something, of the sun playing on her hands, of all the little bits of stuff in the soil: "husks, mossy beginnings and endings, ruffled airy loam-bits, and the greasy silks of clay crushing the pinerot in." Now she arose, brushed herself off, and started toward her house. "I'll be right out," she said.

The screen door banged behind her. On the front steps was a pair of shiny lavender pumps, caked with mud. ♦

A CRITIC AT LARGE

MALICIOUS EYE

Francis Bacon famously used John Deakin's transforming photographs of people to paint from, but until recently many of them had been lost in boxes and filing cabinets all over London.

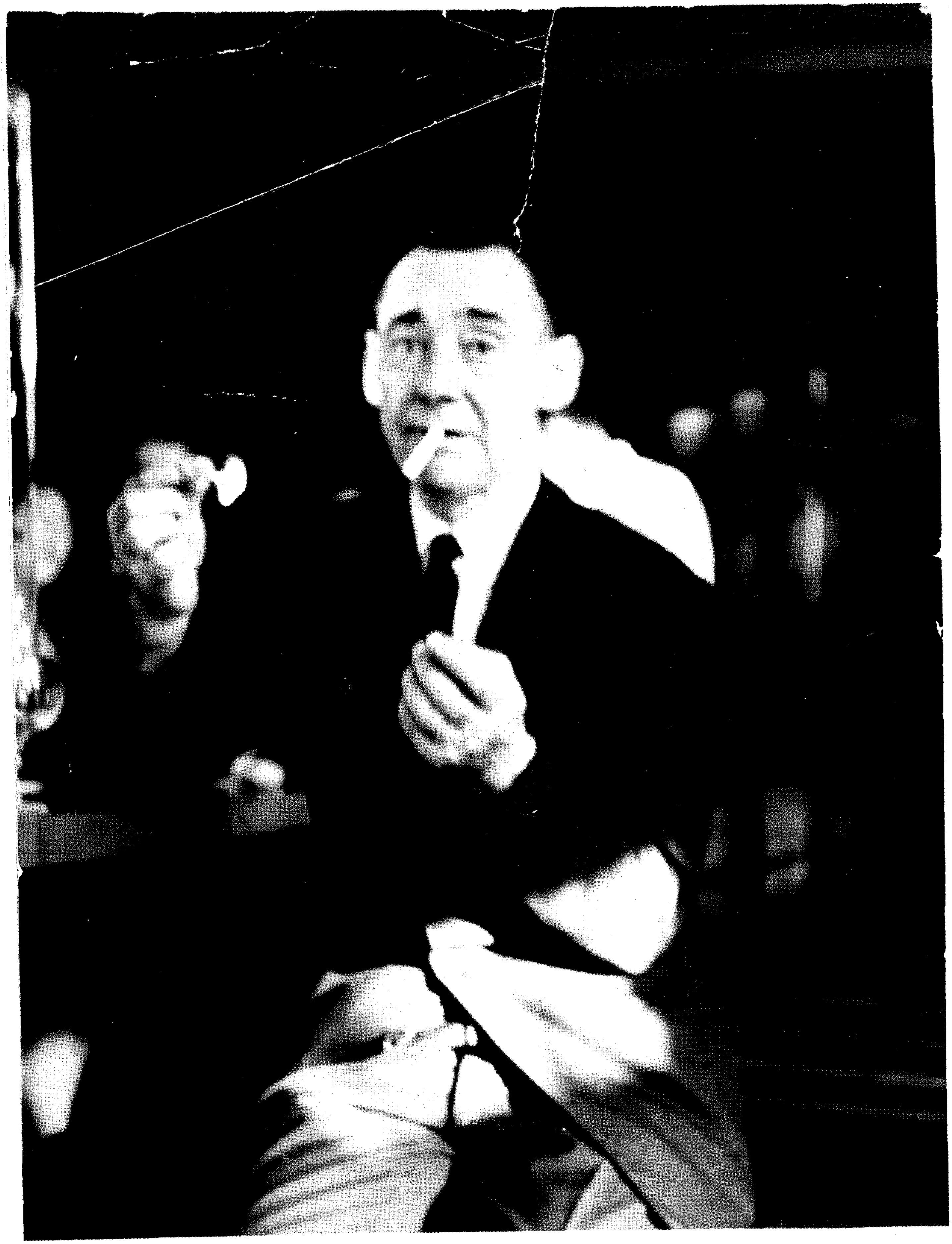
BY ANTHONY LANE

THE British photographer John Deakin, whose work has just been collected in a new monograph, was born in 1912. (The photographs on the following pages are taken from "John Deakin: Photographs," to be published in this country next month by Vendome Press.) Deakin left school at sixteen, moseyed around Ireland and Spain, returned to London, and took up with a wealthy American named Arthur Jeffress, in the lap of whose luxury he spent much of the nineteen-thirties. He became a painter of small significance, flagging in the footsteps of Rouault and Soutine, and then, at the end of the decade, he picked up a camera. During the war, he worked for the Army Film and Photography Unit. In 1947, he was hired by Audrey Withers, the editor of British *Vogue*, as a fashion photographer. In 1948, he was fired, partly because he kept losing precious equipment but also on the ground that he was, Withers said, "incapable of taking a good picture of a beautiful young woman." One can see how that might cause problems. Undaunted, Withers hired him again in 1951; this time, he lasted nearly three years. The rest of his life was a blur of penury and dissolution. He gave up photography in the mid-sixties and died of lung cancer in 1972. And that, in a way, is where the story begins.

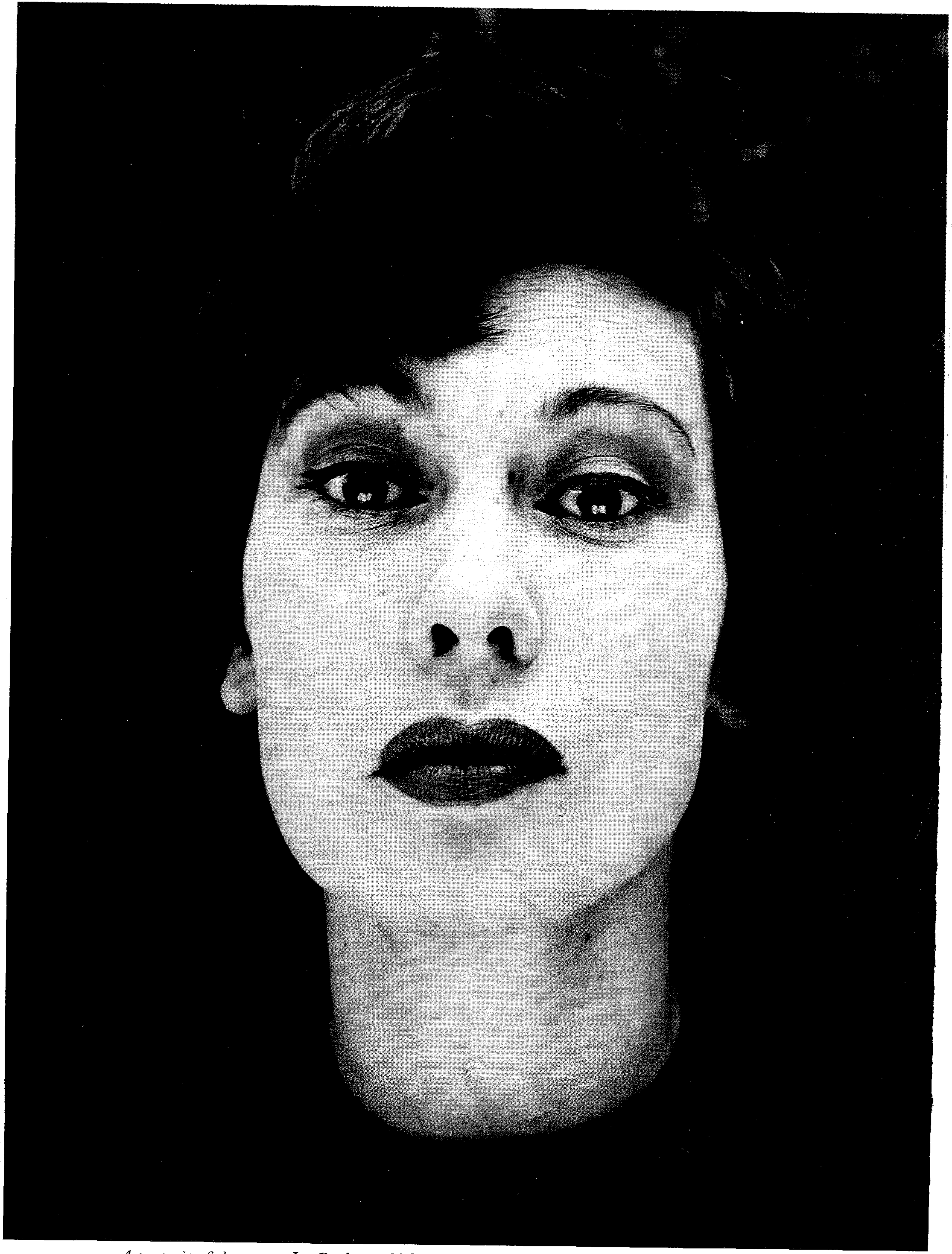
After Deakin's death, a stash of prints was discovered under his bed. More were dug up from the *Vogue* archives, where inadequate storage had left them ripped and creased. Still more were found on the floor of the painter Francis Bacon's studio, which is about as promising a place to scatter your life's work as anywhere on earth. Bacon had been a close friend of Deakin's; together they moved through the mangy Soho life of the fifties and sixties. Soho is, or was, an infamous patch of London, lying just south of Oxford Street. It has long been considered the center of London's vice trade, although the viciousness, which consists largely of bored girls in doorways, is all part of the myth; these days, the place is prosperous and laughably unthreatening. Deakin's Soho was certainly rougher, but, like Paris in the twenties, it was hardly undiluted fun; a handful of true painters—Bacon, Lucian Freud, and the more reticent Frank Auerbach—plied their trade amid the usual cast of bingers, boozers, has-beens, and hangers-on. Deakin himself is a flickering figure, hard to nail down; he nagged and probed at the lives of the artists, but remained an incorrigible wastrel—"a vicious little drunk of inventive malice and implacable bitchiness," in the words of one contemporary.

And yet the malice *was* inventive; Deakin did nothing for war or fashion photography, but in his confrontations with the human face, brooding and unadorned, he forced the medium along an unfamiliar path. He was a short man, and his camera tended to look up to people; as a result, they loom out and over the viewer, filling the frame with a slight bulbousness that gives off the unmistakable whiff of pride or menace, or of a night that went on too long. Sometimes Deakin cuts them off at one edge, as if their jowls had spilled out of control. Everyone, regardless of talent, acquires a tinge of the criminal; actors play up instinctively to the camera, so it comes as no surprise to find Paul Scofield and Robert Morley at their most dark and devious, but when even Maria Callas and Victoria de Los Angeles look as if they were about to get twenty years for gunrunning it seems beyond dispute that we are in the presence of a transforming eye. Deakin is a master of the mug shot; he forged a minor art from it, although, as with many photographers, there was something of a conspiracy between design and chance. It was the Deakin of the darkroom who punched up the grain of his prints, but it was time and neglect that beat them up and gave his most notorious images—especially those of Freud and Bacon—a used, even abused, feel that not only appeals to our junk-sharpened modern appetite for *objets trouvés* but is also horribly appropriate to the habits of Soho.

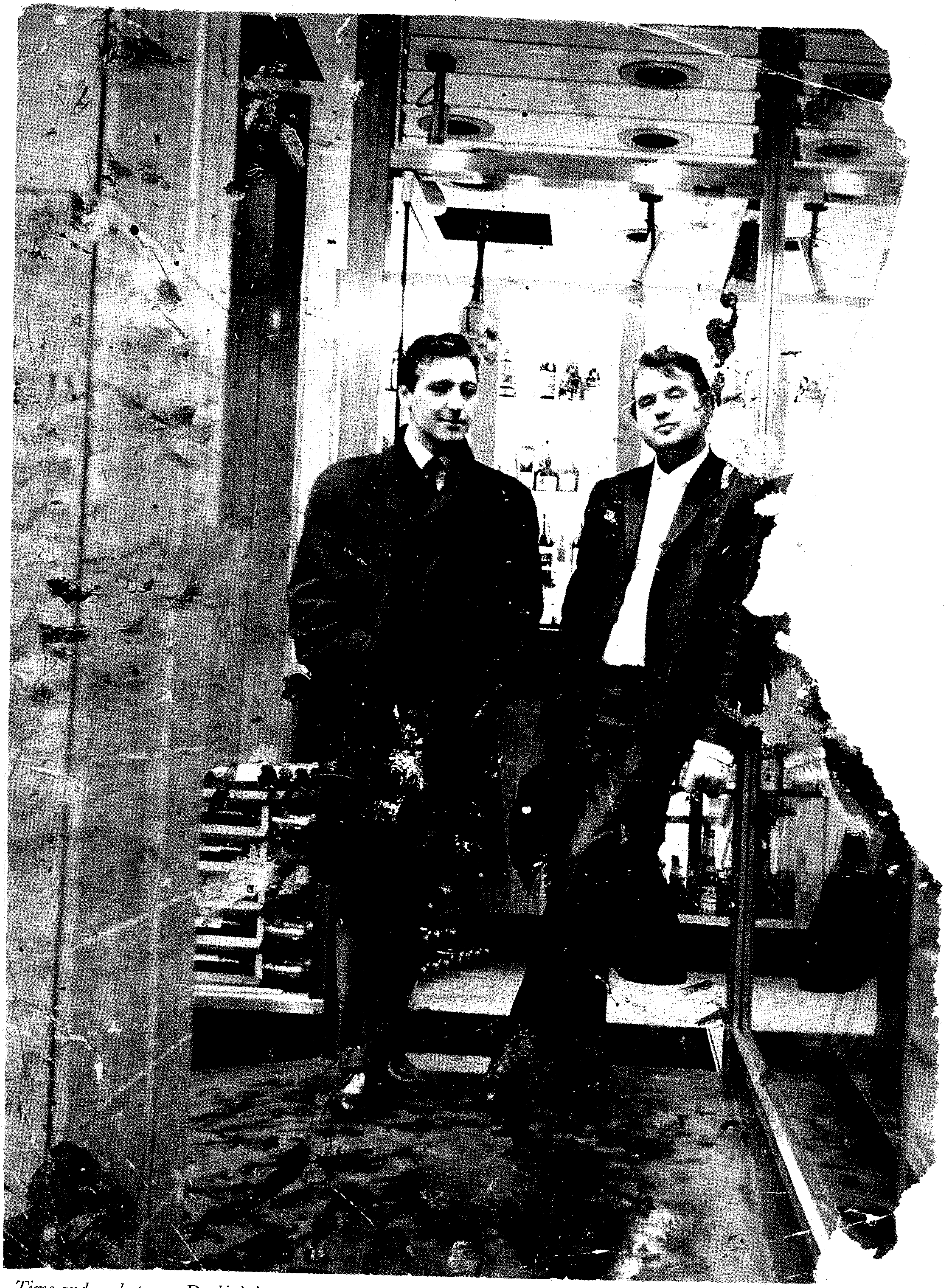
ALL of which is enough to confirm John Deakin as one of the best scouts of the century: he mapped out a certain territory, both geographical and facial, and prepared the way for someone more formidable than he was. Where, after all, do the rounded and wounded features of Deakin's subjects—his victims—return to haunt us, their flesh thickened into aggressive swipes of paint, if not in the mature work of Francis Bacon? It is a matter of record that Bacon turned to Deakin's photographs as source material for his own creations, in the way that other artists employ sketches; the result was the most fruitful linkup of its kind since Rodin hatched and shaded over photographs of his half-finished sculptures, as if searching for the next move. How serious, let alone sober, Deakin was in these crucial transactions is another matter. Having taken some nude shots of the model Henrietta Moraes, a prominent figure in Bacon's painting, the photographer was discovered hawking them to sailors in a London pub. When Deakin needed a drink, the history of art could go hang. ◆



John Deakin in the nineteen-fifties, in a photograph attributed to Frank Auerbach.



A portrait of the actress Joy Parker, which Deakin took in 1953, shows his mastery of the mug shot.



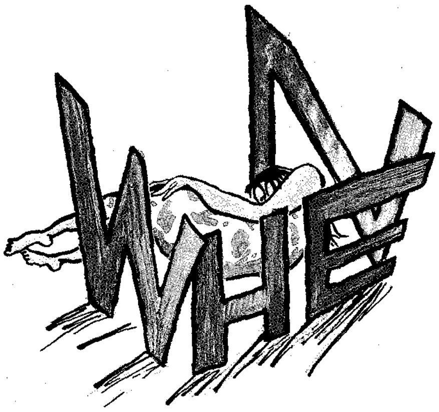
Time and neglect gave Deakin's images the feeling of found objects. George Dyer and Francis Bacon in the nineteen-sixties.

FICTION

THE CLOSET

Just behind the door, her sister found a place of unreachable exile.

BY ALLEGRA GOODMAN



she got home from work, Evelyn realized that her sister was now living full time in the closet. It was a big closet that spread out under the eaves. The house was built in the old Hawaiian style, two stories and white, with a long porch in front, and thick glass windows instead of louvres. There was even a cellar faced with stone—a rarity. Evelyn and her sister had a real old-fashioned Mainland house dug into the ground. In the thirties there had been a terraced garden. What remained was a macadamia-nut tree that pressed against the second-story windows. All the plants pressed on the house, damp leaves against the glass. The Manoa rains bent and warped the wooden doors. That morning, Evelyn had thought maybe her sister was stuck, that the closet door had jammed up there.

"Hit the top and pull the knob down at the same time," she called through the door. "Turn the knob and pull it down and hit the top above your head."

There was no answer.

That afternoon, when Evelyn walked in from the bus stop, the house was still. Lily's clothes and her books had been neatly cleared out of the rest of the house. Her toothbrush and even her old piano music were gone. The music rack and the piano bench were empty.

Lily had often gone up to the closet during the day. They were used to that. Lily was ill. Her illness had many shifting names and ambiguities. Her actions, however, seemed to become more pointed and specific every year. She would not drive. Then she would not leave the house. She would not cook or play the piano, pick up the telephone, or answer the door. Now, it seemed, she would not come downstairs.

Evelyn told her husband about it when he came home. "Should we call the doctor?" she asked him. "Should we call Roselva?" Roselva was Lily's caseworker from the Hawaii Department of Human Services.

"Oh, for God's sake," Stan said.

"I'm sorry," Evelyn said, and she was sorry. It was hard on Stan, living with his sister-in-law in such a state.

"She's forty-nine years old," Stan said, and he paced around the living room.

Evelyn looked at him nervously. She was afraid Stan would blow his top. Lily had always been afraid of him. Stan came from a tall, meat-eating family in Providence, Rhode Island. He grew up wearing shoes in a dark house on a hill, a house rattling with storms and icicles. Evelyn, personally, had never seen it in winter, but the picture was there in her mind, the ice and snowdrifts.

Evelyn made spring rolls with fresh mint leaves for dinner. She steamed some rice and made mock duck and spicy vegetarian meatballs, which her sister loved. She set the table and opened the double doors between the living room and the dining room. Soon the scent would fill the house; it would drift up the stairs into every corner. She imagined somehow that the scent would drift up from her to Lily. It would be like the incense in their Chinese uncle's little temple in Kaimuki. She and Lily used to go there when they were children. They would smell the incense sticks and the candles in the shrine by the brown runoff canal trailing down to the ocean. Now a light haze of smoke drifted from the cooling wok in the kitchen.

Evelyn went to get Stan, and she found him in the basement. He was cracking a macadamia nut in the vise. It was the only way; they were so hard. "Dinner," she said.

They ate by themselves. Afterward, Evelyn took up spring rolls, mock duck, meatballs, rice, and a pitcher of iced tea on a tray for Lily. She left the tray by the closet door. The food was gone in the morning. Only a few rice grains were left.

She started leaving food out every night. Saimin on the hot plate, tofu-and-alfalfa sandwiches on sprouted-wheat rolls, vegetarian Manapua from work. Evelyn worked in Ala Moana Shopping Center at the Golden Apple—famous for selling vegetarian whole food. Evelyn had created a lot of the Golden Apple's recipes. She had been in the vegetarian-shiatsu-acupuncture community for years and had pioneered several techniques for taking the meat, fat, and cholesterol out of Hawaiian food. Admittedly, the vegetarian version often bore no resemblance to the original. Real Manapua—the kind kids bought after school—were big white dumplings, soft and glutinous, made of flour and lard, with a little pork in the center and a red mark on the round surface like the chop mark of a brush painter. Evelyn's whole-wheat-and-bean dumplings were nothing like this. Still, they had their following at the takeout counter. She brought extras home for her sister. She put out her homemade almond cookies and cold drinks. Each morning the food was gone. Lily didn't speak to her from inside the closet. She made no sign that she intended to move back into her own room.

When Lily had been living up in the closet for a week, Stan got nervous, because he needed to get an estimate from the exterminators. He had already scheduled the appointment. The termite-control team had to look at the whole house—and especially the closet. They had to get in there and assess the damage.

"Maybe it can wait," Evelyn suggested as they ate breakfast.

"It's waited thirty years," Stan said. "It's waiting that caused all this in the first place! We've got dry rot, mold, silverfish, beetles. They're talking about a tent job."

"If it's waited thirty years, I guess

it can wait a little longer," Evelyn said.

"We've got some walls in the bathroom, they're only paint," Stan said, and he stared over Evelyn's head at the damp rotting part of the wall where he envisioned a gaping hole above the utility sink. He looked down at the worn wooden floor, which was damp and, he thought, chewed up.

"Don't be upset," Evelyn said.

She didn't know what else to say. Stan hadn't wanted to move into the old house in the first place. Evelyn thought maybe the Mainland-style basement brought back unhappy memories for him. Maybe it reminded him of his father, whom he grew up disappointing. His father was a famous theoretical physicist, a big professor at Brown. He studied the structure of the universe and expected his only son to do the same. Stan was no good at it, and ran away to join the Air Force so he could be a pilot. He was going to fly fighter planes, screaming off into the sky from aircraft carriers, but in the end the Air Force decided to send him to Hawaii to be a meteorologist.

"Your parents just let this place rot away." Stan got up from the table.

As Evelyn washed the breakfast dishes, she looked out the window over the sink to where their fence had been. In a storm last winter the fence, hollowed out by termites, had floated up light as a glider and fallen softly into paint splinters in the neighbor's bougainvillea. But what did a fence matter? It was a good house. It was roomy. It had wood floors. How could it be rotten inside? Evelyn couldn't believe Stan when he said that. The place had ceilings high above even Stan's head.

Evelyn and Lily had come to their grandparents' house with some awe as children. It seemed ancient to them. The koa-wood floors were cool and smooth against their bare feet. Everything cool that way was old. Then, years later, when Evelyn and Lily inherited the place, Lily said she was glad Stan and Evelyn were going to live there with her. She said she would be afraid to live there alone. Five years ago, Evelyn and Stan had unpacked and taken the master bedroom. They had never owned even half a house before. They'd raised their daughter, Anna, in an apartment near the Ala Wai canal. The balcony there was only big enough for two chairs and Anna's bicycle. The kitchen appliances in that apartment were the color people called avocado. It was really more the color of guacamole left in the refrigerator, or the tint of canned asparagus.

EVELYN began to come home from work earlier, gradually, almost imperceptibly—a few minutes earlier each day. With a pounding heart she turned her key in the lock. As softly as she could, she pushed open the swollen front door. There was always a cracking sound as the door swung open, no matter what she did. But she slipped off her sandals and hurried in, half expecting to see Lily on the stairs or catch sight of her in the kitchen. She listened for footsteps; her eyes darted over the living room. She hoped to see her sister downstairs, but the hope was mixed up now with a kind of fear because she hadn't seen her for so long.

She imagined Lily cutting open the papayas Stan kept on the counter. Or watching television five hours at a time, curled up in the leaky beanbag chair that was Anna's before she went to college. Walking through the house in her little tabbies. Lily was small, like Evelyn. They both had size-5 feet. She even imagined Lily instructing yoga classes in the living room. That had been her profession years ago. She would bend, and breathe, and walk around the room, watching her students. Tense shoulders would dissolve at her touch. Clenched muscles would melt. She imagined Lily sitting down at the piano, a lovely Yamaha ruined by the humidity, and playing Chopin in her own curious way, as if she had serious reservations about where the music was going. Lily had soloed with the Honolulu Symphony in 1950, when she was nine, a great event for the family. Evelyn watched as Lily received a three-strand ilima lei from Tutu and a money lei from Auntie Maude, dollar bills folded into flowers and strung into a beautiful green mass. Evelyn got a crisp two-strand pikake lei that hung like a long pearl necklace. After an hour the lei was limp on her neck. It smelled so sweet the fragrance seemed to wring out and exhaust the flowers. She got that lei after Lily's performance, because she was the sister.

But where was Lily now? Maybe in the mornings she snuck out of the house altogether, slipped down the street and took the bus. She could get all the way around the island if she transferred in Waikiki. All the way around, or almost, for seventy-five cents. They used to take the two-hour trip in rattling buses from the Y.M.C.A. summer camp. Every summer they went on that field trip. Lily and Evelyn were on different buses, of course, with their age groups. In swimming class Evelyn was a Polliwog, while Lily had already passed her Fish test. Evelyn was waiting to become a Fish. She was waiting to get to the blue piano book and the green reading level, and backflips.

EVELYN began to make mistakes at work. She nearly scalded herself with hot oil at the deep fryers. She cut her finger slicing sweet potato and forgot the extra crackle batter for the tempura. She got behind on the orders, because all the time she was wondering, Was Lily eating pistachios on the living-room floor? Shelling them into the wastebasket? Was she taking a long bath—washing her hair, leaning back in the tub?

"What's wrong wit' you?" her boss asked her. He was a young kid just graduated from U.H.

"My sister's moved into the closet." Evelyn sighed.

"The closet? How come?"

"I don't know," Evelyn said.

"Whoa," her boss said. "She came out of the closet, and then she went back in?"

On her way to the bus stop each morning, Evelyn began walking back to the house, as if she'd forgotten something. Then she started rushing home in the middle of the day. She thought somehow she could get home when Lily wouldn't expect it. She would meet her on the stairs; she would sit down next to her at the kitchen table, and they would talk. It had to happen, sooner or later. Evelyn left work early; she came late. Every day, she tried her luck, testing the odds like a gambler. In the end, she lost her job.

The day her boss fired her, Evelyn stood in her mother's kitchen and brewed a pot of green popcorn tea. This was a strange but soothing drink; green tea with tiny bits of popcorn floating in it. The tea came from a Chinese store in Kaimuki, where they often had dinner at the King's Garden. They would walk home in the warm twilight past Harry's Music Store, where Lily's music came from—the hardest kind, in manila covers and with black printing, whole chains of tiny black notes, whole archipelagoes.

"I never liked that job," Evelyn explained to Stan when he got home. "I've been thinking about it for a long time. I want to go back and finish my degree. I've

BAR
Gahan Wilson

"You gotta multiply dog years by seven, pal."

just got one more year, and there's a real shortage of chiropractors right now; there's a real need."

"I've got a real need for your sister to get out of that closet," Stan said.

Evelyn gave Stan a back rub. She laid him down on the living-room floor and rolled him out on his back and massaged his ankles. She poked the soles of his feet with the eraser end of a pencil. She knew Stan was thinking about money. She knew he was worrying about the termites. The exterminators were on hold until Lily came down. And no one but Lily knew when that would be. It wasn't a question of asking Lily or reasoning with her. It was one of those things you couldn't change. Like fate. Like the weather. Of course, Stan knew all about the weather; he was a meteorologist. But he hadn't wanted to be one.

At night, in bed, Evelyn could almost hear the bugs chewing the house away. She could hear the soft thuds of the cockroaches flying in the kitchen, batting against the walls. Mold and damp crept over the bathroom tiles. She and Lily had inherited a house dissolving like a white sugar cube into the tropical soil, a succulent white house. Long ago, the termites had begun colonizing the cabinets; the ants wove in and out, exploring. For years, ferns had been growing on the garage roof. A lush canopy of ferns and deep-green moss. The house had a life of its own. Tenting the whole place would be a custom job. The tent would be rolled out and clipped right onto the house, over the tall roof, around all the corners. The house would have to be wrapped up like a Christmas present for the fumigators, sealed up so none of the bugs and poison would escape. It would cost four thousand dollars, plus their hotel bills while the house was sealed away. They didn't have that kind of money. It wasn't just Lily holding them up.

She lay in bed and imagined Lily curled up in the dark closet like the curled-up frond of a tree fern furled into its tight, secret knot. She imagined Lily gliding up and down the stairs, opening the cupboards, her hair swinging behind her, batting softly against the walls.

The kids came home for winter break and ran through the house like giants. The kids were Anna, their daughter, and her boyfriend, Mike. They were both music-education majors at the University of Puget Sound, and they sang together and banged on the piano. Clouds of dust rose wherever they walked.

Anna sat in the kitchen and caught the flying cockroaches in her bare hands and threw them out the door. Anna was big, like Stan. Almost six feet. She had hazel eyes, and hair so thick and long it stood out like a brown cloud around her shoulders. When she braided it down, it bounced back up. She'd inherited the hair from the Hawaiian side of Evelyn's family.

With the kids around, Stan moved differently. His shoulders weren't tight, and he didn't tense up in his neck. Anna was his baby. He'd set out to raise her without the pressure he'd had as a child. Stan had always told Anna—ever since she was three years old—"Listen, no one's telling you what to do, where to go, what kind of person to be." Anna didn't understand all this when she was three, but she did grow up extremely calm. They had raised her without a bedtime and without a curfew, and she was tall and mellow, as some girls are when they grow up with lots of boyfriends and few rules. Anna and Mike spent their days out at the beach. Fine sand spread over the kitchen floorboards and in between the cushions of the couch.

When Evelyn left dinner for Lily by the closet door, Anna came upstairs with her. "Hi, Auntie," she called through the door, "Come out soon. We miss you. The piano is lonely."

"Anna," Stan said at dinner. "It's no joke. Auntie has got Mom waiting on her hand and foot."

"I guess she likes it in there," Anna said. At her side, Mike ate steadily.

Evelyn dreamed that night that she was inside the closet. She'd forgotten how big it was. There was an antique sofa and a phonograph, a pair of tap shoes, and a stack of books up to the round porthole window. "Little Women" and "Doctor Doolittle," twelve Oz books and algebra texts. Lily sat in a wicker rocking chair in there, crocheting.

A scream woke Evelyn. It took her breath away. Lily! she thought. Stan sprang up. They rushed downstairs and nearly collided with Lily, wide-eyed in the pale light of the open refrigerator. Mike stood naked at the kitchen door.

Mike looked around bewildered, sunburned and hairy. "I was hungry," he said.

"Lily!" Evelyn said. "Please. I want to talk to you." But Lily had already started to run.

"Lily! Lily!" Stan yelled, and he scrambled after her up the stairs. He caught at her wrist, but she pulled away so hard he lost his balance and fell. Lily rushed up the stairs and out of sight.

“Stan, you scared her!” Evelyn said. She looked at Stan and Mike. “You scared her. Both of you.”

Mike was still standing there naked. What was wrong with him? Why didn't he put something on? Where was Anna?

Anna had slept through the whole hing.

STAN took off from work and made phone calls. He stayed home the next lay, too, so that he and Evelyn could talk vith Roselva, the social worker.

Roselva came and embraced them both. She wore a red muumuu, and carried Lily's iles in a canvas Honolulu Academy of Arts tote bag.

They sat down together in the livng room.

“Do you think she's in danger?” Roelva asked.

“In danger? Of course not,” Stan said. She's not exactly starving. She comes own, we think, to use the facilities. But ot when we're around.”

Roselva took some notes. “Do you hink she's afraid of something?”

“No,” Evelyn said.

“Well, I'll go and try to talk to her,” aid Roselva. Stan got up, but she shook er head. “I think she'll want to speak to ne privately,” she said, and she walked p the stairs.

Stan and Evelyn sat in the living room nd strained their ears. They heard the eak of the stairs and the squeak of the econd-floor landing. “You think she's eally going to come out and talk to her?” velyn asked Stan.

“Not a chance,” Stan said.

But half an hour passed. Evelyn stood y the front window and watched the ght rain drift in a mist down the street. irds splashed in pools of water between ne roots of the macadamia-nut tree. In ne winter she and Lily used to go mudding near Paradise Park, up at Jackass inger. They took torn cardboard boxes nd hiked up, ankle deep in mud. They asped the slick stems of the giant philondrons, they ducked under the twistg vines. Invisible birds flew overhead nong the leaves. There was a trickle of ater, a hum of mosquitoes. When they ot to the top they flung themselves own on the flattened boxes. Covered with mud, they trudged back up again, scratched their mosquito bites, slicked their hair back in muddy waves. Hidden beyond the trees was the cool pure reservoir, deep, clear, and forbidden.

“Well,” Roselva said. She startled Evelyn and Stan as she came back into the living room.

“She came out?” Stan asked.

“She came out,” said Roselva.

“What did she say?” Evelyn asked. “What does she want?”

“She wants to stay where she is.” Roselva shut her notebook. “I know this is very hard for you.”

“Isn't there something you can do?” Stan asked.

“Well,” Roselva said. “The state can't just go up there and police her life style.”

“Life style! But she's sick,” Stan said.

“Yes, she is ill, but she does have rights,” Roselva said.

“So my wife has to spend her nights cooking for this woman? This is a manipulative recluse we have up there,” Stan said. “This is a woman with a bunker mentality. What if she goes berserk one night? What if she decides to burn the house down?”

“There are groups—for families,” Roselva said. “There are resources. I know this is a big adjustment to make.”

“We can't adjust to this,” Stan said. “We can't live like this.”

“But the fact is,” Roselva said, “she's in no danger, either to herself or to the family. There is no sign of drug abuse, sexual abuse, or alcoholism. She's not a runaway, of course.”

“No!” Stan threw up his hands. “It's just the opposite!” And of course this was true. Lily was not a runaway. Somehow she had done the other thing. Somehow she had gone into internal exile. At the top of the house she had become a stowaway.

RAIN washed the valley green. It ran down green ridges into tiny waterfalls and rivulets and then into Manoa Stream. The ground was soft, the black streets sparkled. Anna and Mike came home that night pink with the sun from the beach in Waimanalo. “You guys should come with us tomorrow,” Mike said.

“It's not raining out there,” Anna told them.

“We'll see,” Stan said. He glanced up at the ceiling in his aggravation, as if Lily

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could see them. But the next day was Saturday, so they went.

Early in the morning, Evelyn packed a cooler with tofu sandwiches, carrot and celery sticks, grapes, bottled water, tangerines, and Maui potato chips. She took a bottle of meat tenderizer as well—to rub on in case someone was stung by jellyfish. Then, at the last minute, she ran up the stairs to the closet door. "Lily, do you want to come to the beach?" she asked. "I think it would be good for you to get out of the house. Get some exercise."

She waited, but there was no response. "I'm leaving you some fruit," she said. She left a little pyramid of tangerines by the door.

They drove out to the other side of the island, and the sea spread out green before them, violet-blue in the distance. The sky was dry and distant, as if rain had never existed.

When they unfurled their tatami mats, the white sand whipped up and sent tiny, almost transparent crabs scurrying into new holes. Anna and Mike plunged into the surf, bobbing and paddling out into the waves. The wet sand sucked up their leaping footprints. Evelyn followed them slowly. She stood where the waves broke at her waist. The air was sweet and salty, like dried salted plums. Maybe they should stop and buy some on the way home. They always used to stop on the way home from the beach and finger the racks of dried seeds. There was dried lemon peel; you peeled it open and picked out the bitter seeds before you ate it, tangy and salt-dusted. There were bags of shredded ginger, wet and fibrous mango strips, juicy black rock-salt plums you sucked until the pits scraped your palate, dried kumquats, plump and tart. I should get some for Lily, she thought as she bobbed over the waves.

On shore, Stan slept, out among the sea grapes, eyes shut, zinc oxide on his nose. The kids were swimming away, paddling farther out like a pair of Irish setters. And, in between, Evelyn stood in the water. She was still thinking about Lily. She couldn't help it, even out there in the ocean. Lily lived now in her mind, with her piano and her yoga mats and her lunchbox from school, her books, her tap shoes—she'd set up housekeeping. When Evelyn swam, Lily was swimming. When she dreamed, Lily was dreaming. Always, her sister was with her. The memory o
her filled Evelyn. Every tiny eyelash o
her. The touch of her dog-eared pian
music, paper worn soft as cloth, th
origami boxes that she had made, th
school uniforms, Black Watch plaid an
white short-sleeved shirts and sandal
The firecrackers on New Year's at th
splintering old temple with its litchi tre
the ground carpeted with red wrappe
and litchis. They were all there insid
Evelyn. They filled her to the brim, th
tiniest details of her sister. No matte
how she tried, she could not stop think
ing about Lily. It was because she woul
never get her back.

No one but Evelyn knew anymo
what Lily used to be. No one else kne
the record and the history of her bri
liant life—all her accomplishment
playing the piano and swimming, all h
days. They lasted only in Evelyn's mer
ory. No one else could picture then
That was the worst thing for Evelyn–
that somehow she was the last of her si
ter's family and friends, the last of t
listeners from those old recitals, and t
Young People's Concert with the Syn
phony, when Lily played in her mu
muu with her tiny perfect fingers, h
hair braided in two glossy braids. H
sound was big and serene. She was li
a jockey riding that black concert-gra
piano. Now all the applause was go
and all that hope; and that old Lily, t
one Evelyn so looked up to, now liv
in Evelyn's head.

Evelyn stood waist deep in the oce
and she jumped over the crests of the i
coming waves. She kicked her feet at t
smooth sand under her. "G
out of my head," she called i
the wind. And she thought, S
in the closet but get out of
head. She didn't mind bringi
dinner to the closet door, or ta
ing away the dirty plates; s
didn't mind, even if Lily ca
downstairs while they were asleep. No
of that mattered. It was the old thoug
and feelings that welled up inside h
The memories that rose up. That v
what was hard to bear. She watched t
kids bobbing in the distance. She to
a deep breath and let it out slowly. S
breathed out, as if she could blow L
back into the world. Lily believed
breathing. It was the center of yo
Breathing was the most import
thing.

Shivering, Evelyn walked in onto

THE VOICE YOU HEAR WHEN YOU READ SILENTLY

is not silent, it is a speaking-
out-loud voice in your head: it is *spoken*,
a voice is *saying* it
as you read. It's the writer's words,
of course, in a literary sense
his or her "voice" but the sound
of that voice is the sound of *your* voice.
Not the sound your friends know
or the sound of a tape played back
but your voice
caught in the dark cathedral
of your skull, your voice heard
by an internal ear informed by internal abstracts
and what you know by feeling,
having felt. It is your voice
saying, for example, the word "barn"
that the writer wrote
but the "barn" you say
is a barn you know or knew. The voice
in your head, speaking as you read,
never says anything neutrally—some people
hated the barn they knew,
some people love the barn they know
so you hear the word loaded
and a sensory constellation
is lit: horse-gnawed stalls,
hayloft, black heat tape wrapping
a water pipe, a slippery
spilled *chirrr* of oats from a split sack,
the bony, filthy haunches of cows . . .
And "barn" is only a noun—no verb
or subject has entered into the sentence yet!
The voice you hear when you read to yourself
is the clearest voice: you speak it
speaking to you.

—THOMAS LUX

beach, and the white foam licked her heels. The ocean rose up behind her. Big, but not big enough.

TIGHT-WRAPPED lumpia boiled up to the top of the bubbling oil, and Evelyn skimmed them out with her open wire ladle. The kids were already sitting at the table. Evelyn set aside four lumpia on a paper towel for Lily and took them upstairs with a little dish of sauce. "It's ridiculous," Stan was telling the kids downstairs. "Ridiculous." Evelyn knelt down and put the plate of lumpia by the door. She didn't feel ridiculous. That wasn't the word. She was exhausted and trembling, hot with unburn between her shoulders. She was aching. But they ate dinner as usual, watched the news on television. The kids went out to a movie. Stan said the sun had done him good.

At night, when she was falling asleep, Evelyn felt the rise and fall of the waves against her body. It had always been that way when they spent the day at the beach. The rhythm of the waves stayed with her, washed over her. She dreamed she was jumping waves with Lily. She dreamed of the nights after those long jumps over waves. How she and Lily would fall asleep with the waves still rushing against them. And the waves rose up in their beds, and the two of them kept on leaping, kicking up the sand, and springing over the white water, heads up over the tangled crests of the waves.

Evelyn woke for a moment and then felt herself falling asleep again. She knew the dream would still be there. ♦

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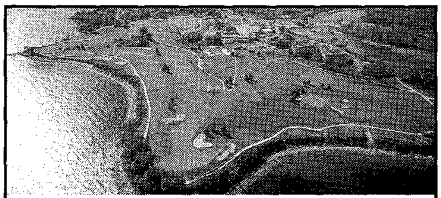

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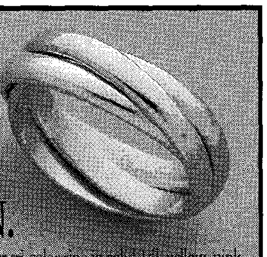

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BOOKS

HOW REVOLTING

Why what disgusts us defines us.

BY JOSEPH EPSTEIN

DISGUST, like charity, begins at home. A bit closer than home, actually: it begins in and with one's own body. Consider only the fluids and the substances that this fleshly vessel totes as it is put through its daily maneuvers: urine, feces, mucus, phlegm, saliva, blood, pus, and more. Orifices, glands, and sphincters all churn out a rich effluvium of guck, goo, and gunk. No need to mix and stir; we already have what is known as, in the biologist's term, life's soup. For myself, I'd rather order the bouillabaisse.

William Ian Miller, however, in writing "The Anatomy of Disgust" (Harvard; $24.95), has not only ordered the soup but, like the fly in the old joke, chosen to do the backstroke in it. Sometimes one envies a writer for having hit upon a fine subject, but not Professor Miller, who has had to wallow, for heaven knows how long, in so many reflections upon what are essentially abominations. "The Anatomy of Disgust" is one of the few books I know that would in no wise be aided by illustration. "The next three chapters are not for the squeamish," he warns us early on. And—being about attacks on the senses from gestation, fornication, defecation, and death—they indubitably are not. "Snot is contaminating. I don't wish to go into excessive detail," he writes. But, of course, with that sentence he already has. "The anus as the endpoint of the reductive digestive process is a democratizer," he notes. "Earwax is ambiguous," he cautions. Terence said that nothing human was alien to him, but Miller may be pushing it. He writes knee-deep in the big muddy of the humanly loathsome; only the word "smegma" is missing from his index.

Yet one does well to hold one's nose and keep one's eyes open and read on, for Miller, who teaches law at the University of Michigan, has written a most useful book, not quite free of either longueurs or the occasional touch of academic stuffiness, but one that takes its readers, however reluctantly, down alleys of life worth traversing. One wouldn't have thought that the subject of disgust could exfoliate so elaborately, or throw off so many provocative insights, as it does in these pages, not only into the way we live now but into the way we have always lived. The capacity for disgust, it turns out, may be as significant as any quality we possess. Our antipathies define us as surely as our sympathies. What Robert Burton did for melancholy, Professor Miller attempts, with reasonable success, to do for disgust. In fairly brief compass, he sets out what disgust is and how it works, and speculates upon its complex social point.

The emotion of disgust—and Miller argues that it is an emotion—is evidently universal, though it has attached itself to different objects in different times and different places. Against those who hold that the disgusting exists to remind us of our animal origins, and claim that this is why we are repelled by it, Miller argues persuasively that the disgusting is solidly tied to the sensory. "Part of disgust is the very awareness of being disgusted, the consciousness of itself," he writes. More embodied, more visceral than any other emotion, disgust forces us to concentrate on the objects that call it forth. According to Miller, it is difficult to "imagine a culture in which disgust does not figure in some way." One of the marks of one's own civilization, you might say, is the number of removes at which one can place oneself from the disgusting.

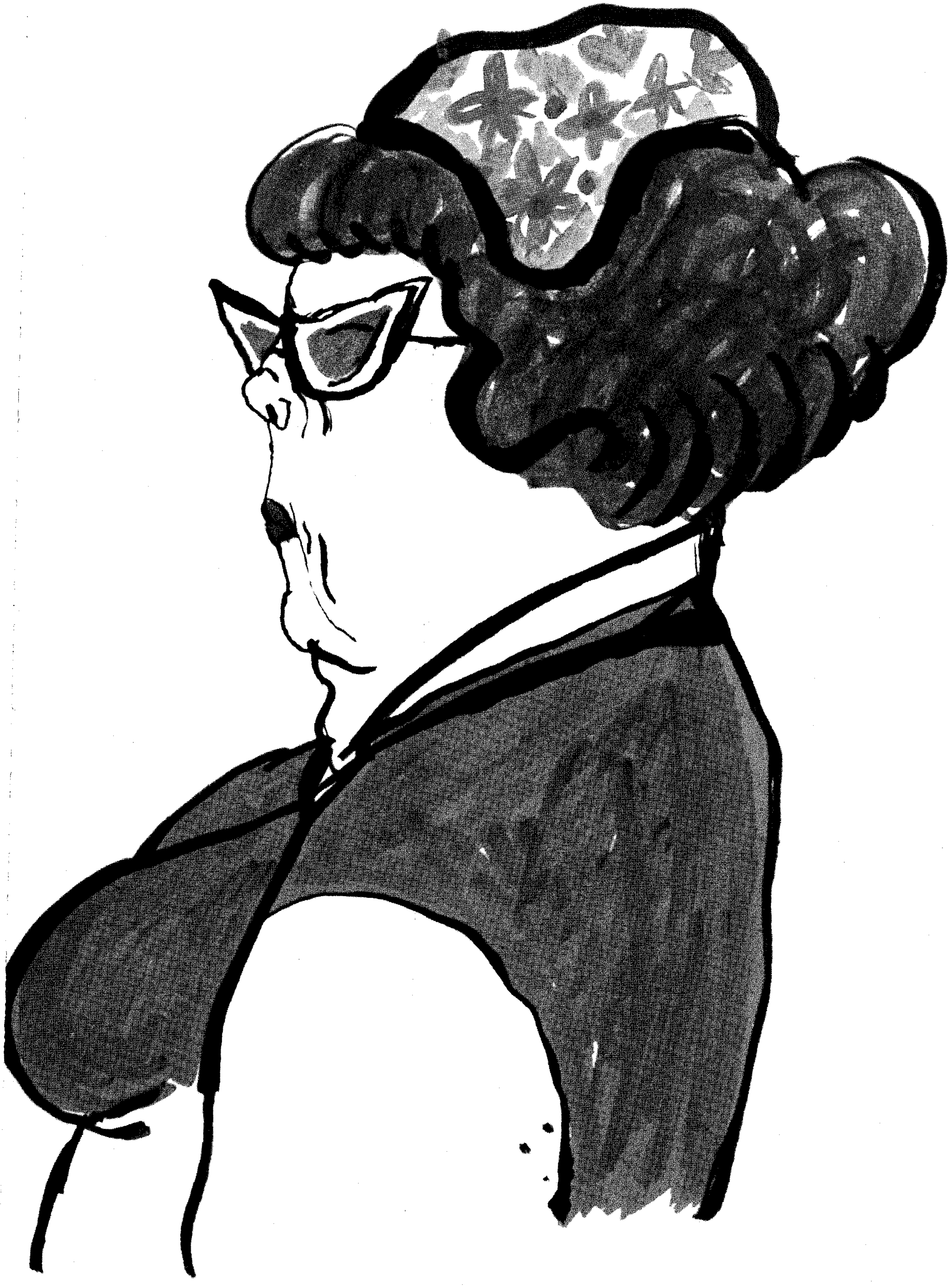
Like laughter and tears, disgust is, apparently, a distinctly human phenomenon; if any animals suffer disgust, we do not know of them. Children, saints, and maniacs seem to have a higher threshold of tolerance for the disgusting than the rest of us. Miller restricts himself to Western culture but remarks that some things come close to qualifying as cross-culturally disgusting: incest, feces (human more so than animal), menstrual blood. Miller himself thinks semen the most contaminating of substances, at least to men. But then in the realm of the disgusting there is no accounting for taste.

As with certain very expensive restaurants, so with disgust: presentation can be everything. G. C. Lichtenberg, the eighteenth-century German physicist and aphorist, noted, "How much depends upon the way things are presented in this world can be seen from the very fact that coffee drunk out of wine-glasses is really miserable stuff, as is meat cut at the table with a pair of scissors. Worst of all, as I once actually saw, is butter spread on a piece of bread with an old though very clean razor." In this formulation, we see the nice distinctions that the emotion of disgust can call up. Of Lichtenberg's three items, I find the second much the most disgusting. I am a carnivore, card-carrying, who agrees with Finley Peter Dunne that "most vegetarians I ever see look enough like their food to be classed as cannibals." Yet the mere thought of scissors tearing through flesh and gristle causes a shiver in me.

The reason it does so is that I do not like to contemplate too closely that which I enjoy. This includes my own health and, hence these vitals that make it possible. I am one of those biologically deeply incurious persons—also known as squeamish—who would be quite happy, as I am most of the time, to be unaware of the placement o function of their kidneys, gallbladder, spleen and pancreas, and let us not speak of those blood-drenched canals called arteries Aesthetically speaking, I should prefer my heart to be a valentine instead of the pulsating, squishy machine it is. My feeling won't be in the least hurt, in other words if you do not invite me to your son's *Bris*

Am I too fastidious, a prig of the disgusting? "Fastidiousness," Miller writes, "is fear of disgust." He does not have a hig opinion of this fear, holding that "fastidiousness is characterized by a certain triviality a certain foolishness that is excessively concerned with the very particular." Miller compares the fastidious with those who suffer larger disgust, with life itself—what used t be known as acedia, or world-weariness, o the model of Sartre's "Nausea." This doesn match my experience. My sense of disgus doesn't require anything in the way c generalization. The disgusting is simpl more vivid to the squeamish, who ar

Finding other people disgusting brings with it the pleasing compensation of allowing one to feel quite splendid about oneself.



BRIEFLY NOTED

THE END OF DESIRE, by Jill Bialosky (Knopf; $21). Part chronicle of a Cleveland girlhood, part portrait of an artist as a young woman, this graceful, mournful, and often exuberant first book combines the best aspects of confessional and lyric poetry. After the death of her father, the narrator takes care of her younger sister and learns all too quickly from her precocious older sister as their beautiful mother dissolves into alcoholic grief. But her fascination with the world around her means that the poet is never truly bereft, and her book can be read as a gorgeous litany of "reasons for surviving the night."

SUBHUMAN REDNECK POEMS, by Les Murray (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $18). Australia's best-known and most widely exported poet has picked up his compatriots' habit of cosmopolitanism. Ranging from Dublin and Hollywood to Phrygia and "Dreambabwe," these poems also tour an array of tonal prospects, like satire, song, and invective, which we don't often hear in our literary republic. Few poets have Murray's gift for marrying the musical and the political. Subhuman redneck he is not.

DAYS LIKE PROSE, by Alan Michael Parker (Alef; $12). The poems in this, Parker's first collection, are built out of wayward facts, numinous, lightly proffered images, and a host of rhetorical strategies. They look several ways at once—out to the horizon, and down and around into the world's refreshing detail. Parker is a poet of intimate experience, but his ambitions are never just local. He understands as well as anyone that only by concentrating on the particular can we be "clapped by the roar of being."

THE FOUR QUESTIONS OF MELANCHOLY, by Tomaž Šalamun; translated from the Slovenian by various hands; edited by Christopher Merrill (White Pine; $15). This volume includes poems from twenty-five previous volumes that Šalamun (born in 1941) published in Slovenia, and also new work. Given the history of his country—annexed, compartmentalized, subsumed, decimated, liberated—it comes as no surprise that many of the poems here brave nihilism, satire, or surrealism, and that each, in its way, resists a party line. What does surprise is their introspective force: "I'm scared. / I'm just a stone's throw away from God." Playful and brooding, meditative and declamatory, these poems affirm Šalamun's status as a major Central European poet.

RADIO TOOTH, by Paul Jenkins (Four Way; $12.95). Midwestern rural collides with Eastern urban-suburban in thirty-seven poems that enact the postmodern battle between knowing and mere knowingness: "the dead mall cheek to cheek with the live mall," for instance. Jenkins's resolutions and truces are indomitably surreal; these poems—on geography, genetics, faith, and loss—are jokes and non-jokes at once, dazzlingly off, yet pure reportage. The balance falters in an earnestly wrapped-up ending, but everywhere else a wild inventiveness proves out a weird, heightened hope.

---

more imaginative about the loathsome and more firmly convinced of the crystal-like fragility of life, or so I prefer to think.

I am less than eager to visit India, for example, because I fear the spectacle of the badly deformed, the sadly deprived, the dirty, and the daunting that it seems to offer in such profusion. To enjoy India one has to conquer disgust. V. S. Naipaul showed, in two different books, that he was never quite able to do so. Mother Teresa, of course, has done so. In her work, she may be thought to be following in the line of St. Catherine of Siena, the fourteenth-century nun whose humility-inducing practices included drinking a cup of pus drained from the wounds of a sickly woman, thus establishing her martyrdom by overcoming disgust. "One simply did not drink pus," Miller writes, with nice understatement, "even back then."

MALE saints seem to have specialized in self-torture, female saints in accommodating the loathsome. Women, it appears, are better than men at coping with the disgusting. Nursing, consigned to the lower end of the medically disgusting, has for the better part of history been performed by women. Women seem to be on closer terms with their bodies—owing, perhaps, to the experience of menstruation early in life, childbirth in its middle, and menopause toward the close. Then, too, they have had to deal with the sexuality of men, which, as one does not have to be a feminist to point out, is not always the best buy in town.

Yet women have traditionally been recipients rather than dispensers of the disgusting. Miller writes in a footnote, "Women seem much more able than men to overcome disgust in the interests of love and devotion even if it is granted that their initial sensitivity to disgust is likely to be higher than men's across the relevant domains." Women are also held up to different standards in the realm of the disgusting. A woman picking her nose, a belching or a flatulent woman, a spitting woman—all qualify as rather more revolting than men happily engrossed in the same activities. The notion of a female John Belushi is not comical; it is grotesque.

Historical changes in the perception of disgust are fairly common. To accustom us, to acculturate us, to that which disgusts us has sometimes seemed the major project of psychotherapy. Freud, as everyone who has read him knows, is full of *merde*. Some of the seismic shifts in the perception of disgust in recent decades include changes in attitude toward cigarettes, breast-feeding, childbirth, profanity, and obscenity. To consider only breast-feeding, women of the up
per classes once put their children out to we
nurses. Breast-feeding came back, but as re
cently as the fourth decade of the twentiet
century it was still considered rather peas
anty, and hence vaguely disgusting, amon
the middle classes. Now it has come to seer
a deprivation—to mother and child alike—
if a mother is unable to suckle her childrer
To take out a breast and do it in public
thought in many quarters better form tha
taking out a cigarette and doing it in publi

It's not clear, however, whether a wider
ing tolerance for the disgusting constitute
psychological progress. Different people na
urally have different thresholds for the dis
gusting. Harold Ross, James Thurber re
ported, "nursed an editorial phobia abo
what he called the functional: 'bathroom an
bedroom stuff.' " Edmund Wilson claime
that he could not read the Marquis d
Sade over breakfast. Literature, in fact, h
a little pantheon of writers who have sp
cialized in the disgusting: Rabelais, Swi
Joyce, Céline, Henry Miller, Antho
Burgess, Hubert Selby, Jr., Philip Rot
William Gass—the rub-your-nose-in-
school. The chief thing that daring wri
ers dare to do nowadays is to disgust the
readers; it is all that is left them now th
the gates of censorship have fallen.

Certain traditionally taboo topics st
continue to ring the gong of disgust. Ince
does so, though a bit less loudly, or so o
gathers from the recent memoirs and mo
ies addressing it. But public profanity a
obscenity, for better *and* worse, do not. Di
gust often both repels and, in lesser inte
sity, attracts. The little finger twisting in t
ear, the sneak peek into the handkerchi
the quick check of the stool—everyone, I su
pose, goes out on forays of his own into t
disgusting. "Seinfeld," on prime-time tele
sion, regularly dawdles with disgust, havi
done shows on masturbation, nose-picki
and other human pastimes—disgust lite
suppose it might be called. But surfeit, ev
of the most pleasurable activities, can its
bring disgust; of the seven deadly sins, gl
tony is the most patently disgusting, a
too fat people are often judged benea
contempt, which is, as Professor Mil
observes, where disgust begins.

AVOIDING the disgusting in life is n
of course, at all within one's pow
Disgust comes not only in many varia
but in a vast variety of shades, includi
what I think of as reluctant disgust. T
includes the disgust one wishes one did
feel but does at the spastic child lashed

he electric wheelchair, at the elderly wom-
n with hideous skin cancer, at the stumps
f limbs left by accidents and wounds. I
ecently read "Man to Man," Michael
orda's memoir of his bout with prostate
ancer, and was most moved by the
hought of a man who favors jodhpurs
nd sartorial elegance having to wear dia-
ers and carry about a thick plastic bag to
apture his own uncontrolled flow of ur-
ne. I was once told by a doctor that I had
rohn's disease, and I feared, above all,
aving to undergo a colostomy and thus
o confront, daily, my own muddiness. No
ne, I suspect, gets a complete pardon
rom the disgusting.

Only love seems to have a chance at
onquering disgust—or, at least, of damp-
ng it down in particular cases. Concern-
ng the women and men we love, we
gree to believe nothing about them can
isgust us. (One of the first signs of fall-
ng out of love may well be the creeping
ntrance, in connection with them, of
isgust.) One doesn't, somehow, mind
leaning up after one's own infant chil-
ren or grandchildren. One's lover suffer-
ng a grave illness or one's aging parents
equiring care do not present the same
aunting prospect of disgust that strang-
s in the same condition do. Even the
esses of one's pets, qualified as they are
y affection, seem less discouraging—in-
eed, less detestable—than those of un-
nown creatures. And let us not forget
lf-love, which in the end seems almost
ways to defeat self-disgust, as it defeats
odesty and common sense.

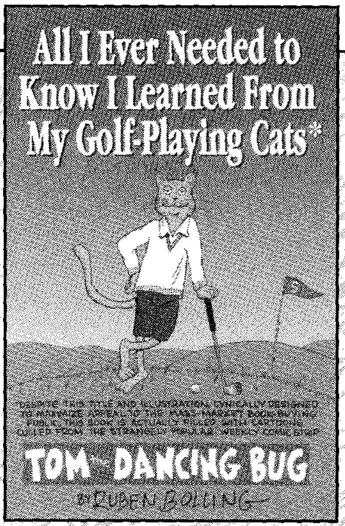
For some people, disgust brings its own
easure, even erotics. Miller writes, "Sex
perceived as dirty, bestial, smelly, messy,
icky, slimy, oozy, and that is precisely,
r many, its attraction." (Miller does not
into it, but disgust is probably at the
art of the complex antipathies often felt
tween homosexuals and heterosexuals:
ch side is not so secretly appalled by
hat the other does with partners when
e lights are off.) Then, there are those
ho are stimulated by the raunchy, the
ungy, the deep-down ugly. We are clos-
g in here on serious abnormal psychol-
y—necrophilia and all that—which
en the seemingly undisgustable Profes-
r Miller avoids. Nothing, sometimes,
n be as disgusting as one's own thoughts.

DISGUST does not take long to make
the jump from the physical, or
nsory, to the moral. Finding other peo-
e disgusting brings with it the pleasing
compensation of allowing one to feel quite splendid about oneself. Snobbery is built into disgust. Yet, as a moral category, the disgusting can be most inadequate. Bad breath is not immoral—it is bad breath and is disgusting, merely. Such is the strength of disgust that when it's present it tends to dominate, but without, as Miller rightly has it, sufficient moral nicety: "Not only does disgust blame a little too indiscriminately and make the category of the moral larger than competing principles of justice, benevolence, pity, and fairness think it ought to be; it also has a style of negativeness, a depressed and depressing style that makes us uncomfortable." Disgust is less irrevocable than, say, indignation, and more misanthropic. "Indignation gives us reasons for living," Miller claims. "Disgust gives us reasons for withdrawing."

Although V. S. Naipaul goes unmentioned in "The Anatomy of Disgust," he has been able to intertwine the morally and the physically disgusting—to give the physically disgusting a moral dimension, and vice versa—perhaps better than any other living writer. Miller does devote an entire chapter to George Orwell, who found disgust, as he found rats and bad smells, nearly everywhere, and who had the most active nose in modern literature. As a boy, Orwell thought that he himself smelled. "The lower classes smell," he announced in "The Road to Wigan Pier," quoting a phrase he had heard throughout his childhood. "Their smell, however, is not their fault. They are dirty by necessity, not by choice." Class antipathies, Orwell felt, were, finally, insurmountable.

As a social historian, Miller favors nurture over nature as the explanation of why certain things disgust us and not others. He is excellent when, enlarging his argument beyond the level of the heartily repulsive, he takes up the social subtleties of disgust. The upper classes have traditionally decided that the lower classes present what Miller calls "a polluting threat," whereas all that the lower classes have to rejoin with is what he calls "upward contempt"—the contempt the low have for the high. Discovering excuses for social antagonism among social classes and ethnic groups has never amounted to much of a problem, and disgust finds its uses here, too.

Disgust "may not be necessary to all rank orderings, but it appears as an insistent feature in some of our most common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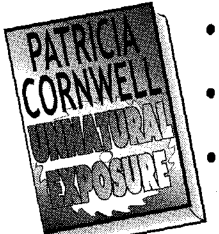

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social orderings," Miller writes. "It figures in class, caste, race, religion, and gender." With its inherent segregating tendencies, it is less than congenial to all notions of democracy. Yet even here complications arise. The disgust of the refined, with their hallowed belief in their own good taste, who allow themselves revulsion at what they take to be other people's want of taste—this disgust, Miller remarks, may just be tinged with envy "towards the unrefined who are able to indulge and not experience disgust." Simultaneously to enjoy feeling disgust and yet envy for the fellow who doesn't feel it—such is the indeciphe able complexity of the sophisticated min

The day disgust is conquered may be th day the game is up. "If you were casual to enumerate the norms and values, aes thetic and moral, whose breach promp disgust," Miller writes, "you would see ju how crucial the emotion is to keeping in line and minimally presentable." Th one can still find reserves of disgust f hypocrisy, cowardice, and cruelty is n minor matter. Without our capacity f disgust, in other words, we might fe more free but, in the end, be less human.

LAW TALK

Revealing a profession's private language.

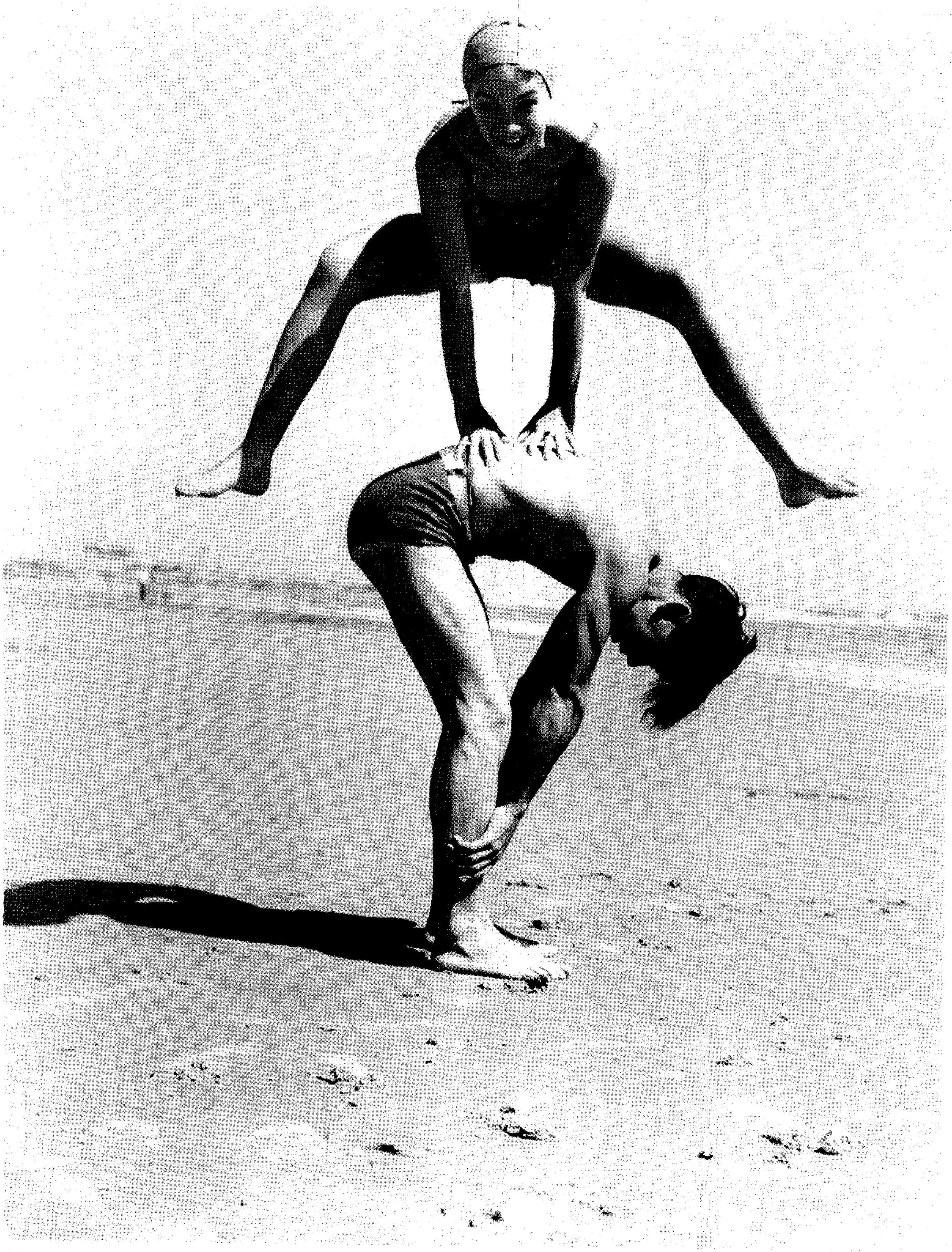
BY VIJAY SESHADRI

To judge by Lawrence Joseph's "Lawyerland" (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $22), a book disguised as a series of interviews with members of the legal profession, lawyers have a way with the spoken language which should make the rest of us sick with envy. They don't seem all that enviable otherwise. The best of them are hopelessly entangled in the moral ambiguities resulting from society's relentless litigiousness. The worst are a little too familiar with some of the more unpleasant current bigotries. But, boy, can these people talk—and not in legalese, with subordinate clauses stalking every eventuality, but in the profane poetry of the American street. This is a criminal-defense lawyer, known for the record as Robinson, venting his views of the world he lives in:

> I've been reading this biography of Learned Hand. Now there, you must admit, was, all in all, one impressive manic depressive. On the bench how many years? Fifty? That famous line of his—dread. Something like, he'd dread a lawsuit more than anything else in the world except dying. Fuhucking A! Consider, for example, this happy thought—an action against you by the People of New York County. . . . Can you imagine not being a lawyer and getting dragged into this shit? . . . Dread, brother—we are talking Kierk-e-fucking-gaardian *dread!* Why the secret? Why not just tell everyone? "Every lawyer shall tell his or her client that becoming involved in the legal system is like three years of experimental chemotherapy, one hundred percent guaranteed not to work." Put it in the Code of Professional Responsibility! . . . Make it a constitutional amendment! The Hand Man postmodernized!

Joseph, who is a poet with three boo of verse to his credit and also a law pro fessor at St. John's University, has con structed a cunning virtual intersection o of his different interests. "Lawyerlan has the texture of a documentary, wi bits of scene-setting and shots of lawye savoring Chinese food, refreshing ther selves with espresso, and stretching the aching backs while they talk about wh they do, but each vignette is so artfu composed, and the testimony being eli ited has so much verbal drama, that isn't long before we begin to wond whether we're in the hands of a wri driven by the occult agendas of ficti rather than the more straightforwa ones of journalism.

Joseph tells us, in an unhelpful "No to the Reader," that his book is "truth rather than factual, but solidly based facts." Beyond this mystifying disclaim no information is available as to wheth our guide is the prosecutor, the judge, t defender, or the court recorder. The bo leaves a strong, graphic impression, rem iniscent in some ways of the impressi left by Saul Steinberg's more trenchant s tiric cityscapes. Its ultimate effect, thou is the kind of bewilderment occasioned the famous paradoxes of Greek philosop such as the one about the Cretan w claims all Cretans are liars. Instead of p viding us with a map of the labyrinth th is the legal system, Joseph uses his sple did talkers to draw us into the labyrin itself, and then abandons us there



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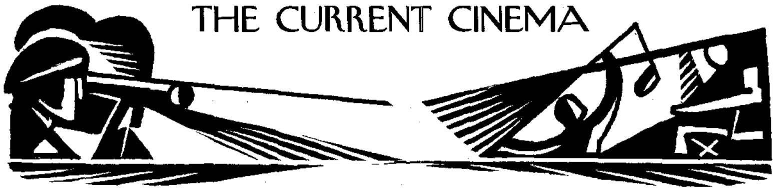


SELF-REFLECTIONS

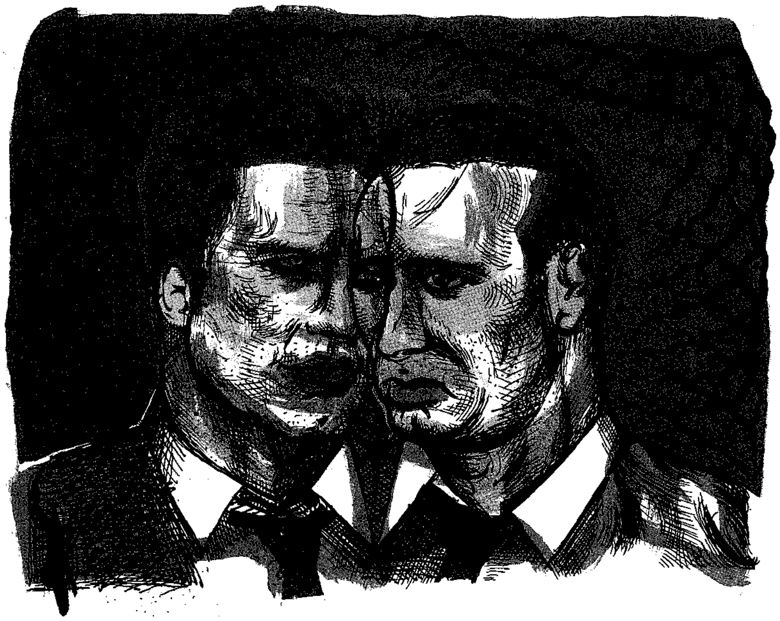
Travolta and Cage swap identities; Godard remains Godard.

BY TERRENCE RAFFERTY

BY the time John Woo's latest action extravaganza, "Face/Off," opened, a couple of weekends ago, probably everyone in America knew its premise: this is a picture in which the good guy (played by John Travolta) and the bad guy (Nicolas Cage) literally exchange faces. Until recently, an idea as dopey as that might have made the film a tough sell to action-movie enthusiasts, but in the past few years credibility has ceased to be any kind of criterion for this genre. As I watched the almost equally ludicrous "Con Air" in a suburban-mall cinema not long ago, I suddenly understood that suspense—which depends on at least a minimal level of belief in the reality of a dangerous situation—wasn't what the audience *expected* of the picture: what it wanted was comedy. And I realized, too, that most of the action movies I've enjoyed in the last two or three years (among them "The Lost World," "Die Hard with a Vengeance," "The Specialist," and Woo's "Broken Arrow") have been the ones that made me laugh at the ingenuity and the audacity of their effects: when they're good, they're likelier to remind you of Buster Keaton or Chuck Jones than of Hitchcock, or even early Spielberg. (In this climate, a competent, reasonably scary thriller like Jonathan Mostow's "Breakdown," which borrows liberally from Spielberg's classic early-seventies TV movie "Duel," can look like a real novelty simply by virtue of its relentless sobriety.)

Because Woo is a past-master of the current antic style of action filmmaking, there was every reason to expect that he'd have some fun with the inane premise of "Face/Off." From a script like this (the authors are Mike Werb and Michael Colleary), the best you can hope for—the only remote possibility of a good movie—is a giddy, violent live-action cartoon, and Woo is just the man for that sort of job. But, surprisingly, his direc
tion here is labored and overdeliberate.
takes him a full hour to plod through th
exposition and complete the identi
swap between the F.B.I. agent Sean A
cher (Travolta) and his nemesis, a cock
flamboyant terrorist named Castor Tr
(Cage). The movie establishes first th
the lawman's pursuit of the criminal
obsessive and intensely personal: a pr
logue shows us Castor murdering Sea
young son. So far, so good—the symbi
sis of the hunter and the hunted is a pe
fectly O.K. thriller convention and,
course, an inevitable motif for a movie
which, as we know, the antagonists a
actually going to metamorphose in
each other. After that sombre openin
Woo tries to gather the speed necessa
for the movie to take off, but he ca
seem to give it any lift; there's too mu
plot baggage in the cargo hold. Befo
the big switch can be accomplishe
"Face/Off" has to put Castor in a co
put his brother and co-conspirator, P
lux (Alessandro Nivola), in prison; e
plain the medical technology that will
low Sean to have Castor's face and voi
substituted for his own; plant Sean-
Castor in the prison, so he can trick P
lux into revealing the site of the e
brothers' latest bomb; and then awak
Castor, so *he* can force the surgeons
give him—for lack of an alternative
Sean's face and voice. And, as if all t
narrative machinery weren't cumberso
enough, the movie lays on scenes of t
hero's domestic life: we see the lovi
wife (Joan Allen) and the sexy teen-a
daughter (Dominique Swain), who
the second half will find themselves
ing with an oddly different Sean.

The writers undoubtedly feel that t
outlandishness of their plot requires t
patient, elaborate buildup, but they
dead wrong. The audience, which o
wants a few laughs and some fast, inve



In your face: John Travolta and Nicolas Cage in John Woo's high-concept thriller.

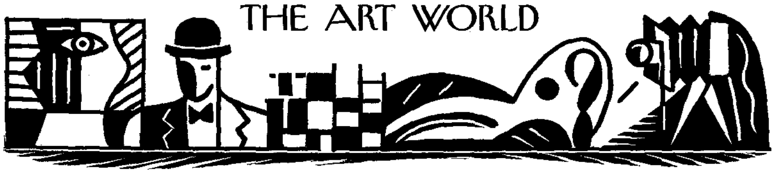
ive action, doesn't need to believe this whopper, and the time spent trying to persuade it to is worse than time wasted. If you're going to attempt to put across a concept as stupid as that of "Face/Off," you'd better do it very, very quickly. Why give moviegoers the chance to *think* about the story? Woo, whose characteristic narrative pace is Roadrunner-ike, should know better; here he's more ike Wile E. Coyote, building a complicated contraption that lurches and talls and then, while he's nspecting it, blows up n his face. The probem with the material of Face/Off" may be that, or all its patent silliness, he central metaphor aps into a streak of heoic sentiment that Woo howed a distinct weakess for in his Hong Kong gangster movies, uch as "A Better Tomorrow" (1986) and Hard-Boiled" (1992). The earlier pictures, in the ccasional respites beween delirious gun bates and multi-orgasmic xplosions, killed time ith disarmingly sincere scussions of loyalty and etrayal and the melancholy necessity of rning yourself into your adversary in der to destroy him. The beauty of Woo's Hong Kong movies, in a way, is at their unself-conscious celebration of ale-bonding hokum gives all those rny notions the kind of force and conction that Hollywood action films aven't demonstrated in a long time. Face/Off" is a comic-book version some of Woo's pet themes, and, inedibly, he seems not to have recogzed that this story can be treated only a joke—as, at best, an absurdist, lightly lf-mocking put-on. He chooses to nder it instead as a parable of good d evil.

And as such it is, predictably, nonise. The real pity is that Woo's wildly appropriate gravity has the effect of lling his natural showmanship, and en of limiting his usually boundless vial ingenuity. Although there are nifty s of business scattered through the two urs and fifteen minutes of "Face/Off," e huge action set pieces that Woo specializes in aren't terribly distinctive here; they're as excessive as ever, but his typical overkill doesn't seem funny or daring—it feels more like the ordinary deliver-the-goods approach of a Hollywood hack. All could be forgiven if the high-concept gimmick—Travolta impersonating Cage, and vice versa—paid off in laughs. (That would relieve it, absolutely, of the obligation to make sense.) But after that interminable, portentous buildup the gag produces only a tiny, disappointing spark, like a damp firecracker. Because Cage is both the villain and the more idiosyncratic actor, Travolta gets the better of the switch, but only marginally: he has, I'd say, three mildly amusing moments to Cage's none. In a way, though, it's Cage, with Travolta's character trapped inside, who most clearly reflects this picture's glum, desperate spirit. Like Woo, he seems tense and tentative, and the reason is probably the same: for this actor and this director, it just takes too much effort to play a straight arrow.

ONE thing Jean-Luc Godard could never be accused of is pretending to be someone he isn't. That's not to say that who he *is* is easy to define. In his latest feature, "For Ever Mozart," Godard, characteristically, shuffles thin shards of narrative, heavy chunks of philosophy and literary allusion, lyrical imagery, and blunt humor, and lays all his cards on the table, face up. He won't interpret them for us, though; the movie, like so many others in his nearly forty-year career, seems to evaporate in a cloud of disappointment, in its author's sadness at having once again failed to make sense of the world, his art, or himself. Among the film's preoccupations is the war in the former Yugoslavia: Godard follows, for a while, the earnest efforts of some young French intellectuals to stage a Musset play in Sarajevo. Political subjects tend to trigger in him a deep melancholia, which expresses itself on the screen as impatience, the restlessness of an artist who can't quite focus his ideas. "For Ever Mozart" is a set of notes for a movie that Godard gradually realizes he's incapable of making; it's a long, frustrating series of false starts.

A ten-film mini-retrospective at Lincoln Center's Walter Reade Theatre (running through July 17th) provides an opportunity to sample some of Godard's best early work—"Breathless" (1959), "My Life to Live" (1962), "Contempt" (1963), "Band of Outsiders" (1964), and "Weekend" (1967)—and to compare it with a few of his more recent films, including "For Ever Mozart." The films of the late fifties and the sixties, which appeared to many viewers at the time perverse and willfully difficult, now look almost shockingly lucid, perhaps because they are, to some extent, products of their maker's youthful faith in the camera's revelatory power, its utility as a tool of understanding. In even the most vigorous of the later movies—"Passion" (1982) and "Hélas Pour Moi" (1993)—that faith feels shaky, all but untenable: when he looks hard at the real world now, the camera, more often than not, bounces it back to him as an abstraction. These mournful works, obsessed with the death of cinema, play like laments for lost love; Godard is most incoherent when in fact he's most inconsolable. He has shown many faces to the public during his career—movie buff, moral philosopher, ideologue, misanthropic comedian—but his voice has remained unmistakable. He was always, even in "Breathless," essentially an anatomist of grief: an elegist. ♦

THE ART WORLD



THE REPRESSIONISTS

A new group of European painters haunts the Biennale.

BY ADAM GOPNIK

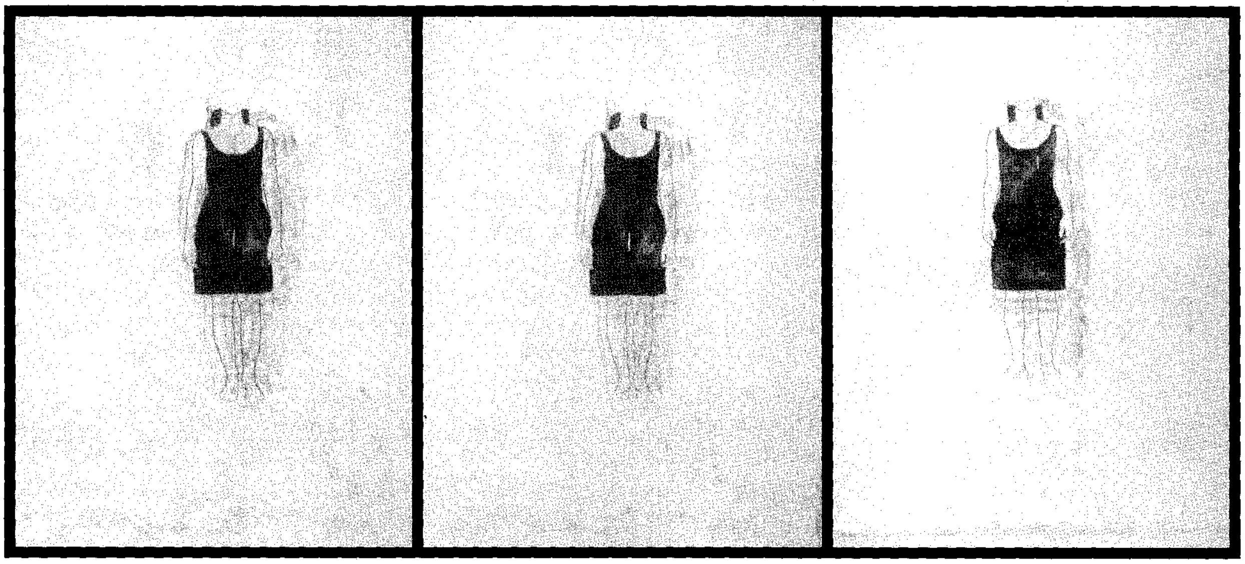
THE forty-seventh edition of the Venice Biennale, the century's longest-running regular exposition of contemporary art, opened last month in its usual home, in the gardens at the very tip of the island. And, as usual, the show is divided into one big, central, multinational theme exhibit and a lot of smaller national pavilions containing the work of one or two local artists. Where the Biennali of the last few years were frantic and purposefully controversial, with theme exhibits whose titles seemed to have been borrowed from syndicated television programs ("Emergency!" was typical), the new edition is orderly, familiar, and so tranquil that it seems almost becalmed. Two national pavilions, the Canadian and the Icelandic, are entirely devoted to video loops of running water. (Iceland's water rolls in waves; Canada's runs in streams.) This year's exposition theme, selected by the Italian art critic Germano Celant, is as beautifully encompassing as the Astrodome: "Future, Present, Past" is the rubric—a choice that sets you wondering what preliminary ideas were rejected as too broad. The spirit of the show is summed up more honestly in the title of a ribbon-winning exhibition of a thousand or so tiny paintings by the artist Ik-joong Kang, in the Korean pavilion: "Throw Everything Together and Add." "Future, Present, Past" is a huge anthology of contemporary painting, sculpture, conceptual art, and video art, divided between the vast Italian pavilion and the even vaster nearby Corderie, the old rope works of the Venetian Arsenal.

The artists who have been chosen by Celant—a genial art-world apparatchik, right out of a Malcolm Bradbury novel, who is busy installing a private conceptual museum in the Basque country on Monday morning and offering a few choice words at a congress on Slovenian video art on Tuesday night—are so divertingly unconnected that the exhibition itself can be taken as an installation piece exploring issues of chance and entropic disorder. (On the other hand, some cynics have suggested that, while the exhibition may be taken as a work of art, it is a purely representational one: a perfect mirror of Germano Celant's dining-out diary over the last two years.) Aging Pop artists, years removed from their best work (Jim Dine, Claes Oldenburg), sit alongside slightly younger, though still aging, neo-expressionists, some of whom (Julian Schnabel, Francesco Clemente) never had best work to be years removed from. Sex and politics, the two great art-world subjects of the late eighties and early nineties, have vanished. Almost the only violence appears in a video loop by a young Swiss artist with the wonderful name of Pipilotti Rist: a pretty girl in a beautiful Botticelli dress walks down a Northern European city street gaily waving a flower, and then stops and smashes the windows of parked cars with the flower (while a woman police officer walking by gives her a nod of approval). The only sex lies in the contribution of the German conceptualist Tobias Rehberger: he has designed a new kind of underwear, in beige tulle, which the exhibition guards are instructed to wear. The art-loving viewer is meant to go up to the guards and demand to, so to speak, see the piece. (The connoisseur can buy a set of the undies in the Biennale bookstore.) The project "eroticizes the space," as they say. (And it does: Is he wearing it? Is *she*?) Unfortunately, or maybe happily, the joke is a bit lost at the Biennale, which is staffed with young Italians who are busy giving one another back massages while Tobias Rehberger walks among them, eroticizing conceptually.

Paragraphs could be written and conversations wasted—indeed, throughou Venice such paragraphs were crafte over drinks and such conversations lir gered in the air on the vaporettos—t explain the complicated network of pe sonal associations, genteel blackmai and abstract theorizing that produce this weird blancmange. Yet the truth that, in the happy way of Italian acci dent, the show works, and is even hear lifting. A more intelligent, responsibl coherent organization would betray e actly what remains cheering and stror in contemporary art: its plurality, i resistant many-voicedness, the sour of music made by a choir that resolute refuses to stay on the same page, in tune.

Part of the pleasure of the Biennal perhaps, lies in seeing so many o friends and acquaintances at work: tl viewer has a chance, in the privacy of h mind, at least, to settle old scores, nur old grievances, and redress old injustice The chief loser in this process is Ansel Kiefer, the German painter whose c lossal, dark, straw-and-mud-and-blo pictures seemed, back in the late eigh ies, among the most "important" pair ings around—at once an elegy to t German romantic subject and the log cal extension of Abstract Expression style. Kiefer is all over the Biennale— "Future, Present, Past" and at the Co rer Museum, on the Piazza San Marc Now, though, his pictures look ov wrought, badly handled, and operatic the wrong way—intended to wow t critics in the cheap seats until the lad with the horned helmets come out sing. His storehouse of rote secondha romantic imagery (the Darkling For the Pyre, the Scary Scorched Landscap which once seemed to suggest a comp cated ironic relation to German my now just looks like a storehouse of r secondhand romantic imagery. It's pa that Kiefer has been recycling this i agery for so long that it's beginning look suspiciously like a gimmick; pa that the touch of his hand is raw a insufficiently individual; and may mostly that his big subject turns out be a nonsubject. With the fall of Berlin Wall, the mystique of Gern memory seems a lot less imposing a theme. Germany is, for good or ill much more normal country now, the insistence on locating a romar landscape, rather than a Mercedes f tory, at its core suggests a bit of wishful thinking. We wanted the Germans to e exotic, grim, "Teutonic," even in reentance. Now Kiefer's subjects look ike tourist traps, bearing the same relaion to real German experience that a inging gondola ride bears to actual Italan life.

On the positive side of the ledger, rice Marden, whose calligraphic abtractions seemed to some of us a dubius decorative footnote to Pollock, has ntributed only a single painting to the hibition, but that one is of such exquite delicacy, authority, and individualy—a pale, soaked-green-and-gray eb of drawing, as natural-seeming as a ne growing over a Venetian trellis—at he looks again like one of the greatt living abstract painters, and one hose best work may lie ahead. And hn Baldessari, the father of the merican conceptual image, is back ith a roomful of his "Goya" series: big ages of simple objects—a pencil, an ple, a brush—laid out on graph paper ith cryptic titles underneath ("So uch and More," "And There Is No emedy"), which evoke the equally yptic titles of Goya's horror images. ldessari played such a large role in fluencing a generation of serious, ilosophical artmaking that it is terrific be reminded how much simple deadn wit, tinged with melancholy, his n sequiturs contain: he is really closer Jarrell than to Wittgenstein, one re sad heart at the supermarket. Even ong the surviving art stars of the eighties, disappointments and happy surprises take place. Julian Schnabel's painting looks more banal than ever—in fact, its badness is so consistent that it is beginning to have a pleasing, stubborn, almost camp period flavor—but Robert Longo, whose career as a serious artist seemed to be over, too, has come back with a really stunning series of drawings: on narrow, neutral backgrounds, a row of six handguns are seen head on, in extreme perspective, the barrel reduced to a single potent hole—the last thing that many Americans ever get to see.



In "Suffering, Despair and Ascent" Julião Sarmento, one of the show's most controversial figures, has reduced his quasi-pornographic imagery to a faceless hieroglyph of a woman in a black shift.

It is exactly that compression of social indignation into a memorable form that the work of Robert Colescott, the official United States representative, seems to lack. Colescott, a black American painter who has been doing original work since the nineteen-fifties, uses a kind of jamboree, picnic style, full of grinning "darkies," pink nudes, and popping eyes, to paint bitter allegorical tableaux of black American life. He has a first-rate intuition for vernacular metaphors: he sees America as, by turns, the "Emergency Room" and "Heartbreak Hotel (Reservations)," to cite the titles and subjects of two of his best pictures. But as a painter he is placid and anodyne; he studied with Léger, and something of Léger's weakness for curving, sedative generalization seeped into his hand. Outsider art appeals to us in part because it is so laboriously precise; Colescott's tableaux of black life, though officially enraged and indignant, seem formally flat, cheery and generalized, illuminated more by a sense of grievance than by a specific sense of rage. His art is cartoonish without being quite caricatural. Set Colescott alongside any of his contemporaries among black American writers—Ishmael Reed is perhaps the closest, in the indulgence of an elevated, hallucinatory vernacular style—and he seems oddly lacking in sorrowfulness and soul. Perhaps it is just that in America, an energy-loving country, the inherited vocabulary of social-protest painting has too much vigor to be tragic. The supposedly suffering workers and oppressive woodcut factories of the socially conscious, *New Masses*-style artists of the thirties, from whom Colescott is in some ways descended, now appear enviably high-hearted. In American painting, even indignation has a way of looking like bounce.

THE responsible critic who has rummaged through the Georgian and Armenian pavilions for Themes and scoured the Irish and Cypriot installations for signs of Transnational Movements can claim to have spotted one of each. The theme is that the style of conceptual surrealism which has spread throughout the world as the common language of advanced art seems to have more juice and spice along the edges than in the center. Among those who seem to have kept alive the comic, larksome side of the Duchampian tradition are the Chinese artist Cai Guo Quiang, whose creaky, alarming wooden rocket ship, trailing the flags of his country, mounts unsteadily toward the heavens in the Corderie, and the Georgian artist Gia Edzgveradze, who offers a neat, fragrant installation of raw carrots and grain. Perhaps it is because the situation of a "modern," let alone a postmodern, artist in those societies is still in some ways absurd that their art still seems proud of its absurdity.

The movement that has emerged involves a new sensibility in painting which has no formal name but might be called Phantom Figuration, or Ghost Painting. The style is chastened, tight, enigmatic, *ghostly*, in wan, reduced colors or in monochrome. It relies on evocation and fragmentation: on bits of bodies and beloved objects, on images taken from old photographs or from dim memories—an art of repressed recollection and fragmentary representation. It is a sensibility to be found in the work of artists as different as the Belgian Luc Tuymans, the Portuguese Julião Sarmento, the Italian Luca Pancrazzi. It is, at first appearance, a classical, restrained manner of painting. But "ghost art" of this kind is based not on simplification, in the sense of emotion submitted to tranquil ordering, but on repression—on a sense of violent emotion closely contained. Though it's a quiet style, almost everyone who paints in it began loud. Whereas the neo-expressionists of the eighties, like Clemente and Schnabel, used images as the enemy of ideas, or at least of an overintellectualized art, the new painters all come out of conceptual art, and particularly photography or video art, and have worked their way back to painting. Tuymans, a young Antwerp painter, who showed eight pieces in the Biennale and has already had a couple of smart shows in New York, is a key figure of the new style. His pictures seem stained rather than painted: they recall overexposed photographs, or barely legible images on shrouds. His subjects are often unsettling, even obscene—a Cyclops figure in a gas mask giving a blessing, a woman inserting a dildo—but are so reticently evoked that their material is understood only long after it has been seen. The painting resonates almost before it registers. (A kindred sensibility can be expressed in sculpture, too. In the national pavilions, the most striking installation is by the young British artist Rachel Whiteread. She makes rubber and resin casts of *absences*, negative spaces: the empty void beneath a table, the air between the books in a library.)

The most controversial figure working within the phantom sensibility is the Portuguese Julião Sarmento, who represented his country in a special pavilion in the Palazzo Vendramin. Sarmento has been around for a while; he first emerged, in the eighties, as a kind of Lusitanian David Salle, with crude, obsessive sexual imagery, rawly painted and presented in an affectless manner. (He also did a lot of quasi-pornographic photography.) In the nineties, though, his work has grown in compression and in authority. The sexual imagery has been reduced to a single, repeated faceless hieroglyph of a woman in a black slip, against a scraped and scumbled neutral white background. The isolated obsessive figure acts out, in stilted pantomime, a minimal sexual theatre: she bends, she leans, she turns. Mostly, she just stands there. A white slash like a glancing flashlight—on her breast, or her thigh—is all there is to suggest desire, or even violent passion. Sarmento credits this transformation to his great admiration for Raymond Carver—a better example of real cultural cross-fertilization than any of the usual forced marriages of the avant-garde—and the finished paintings do have something of Carver's strangled clarity. There are many people who do not care for Sarmento's painting, comparing it to Balthus with all the creepiness and none of the skill. But, as a sign of how much is left in figure painting, reduced to its cave-art basis of memory and desire—to Ghost Painting—it was, for some of us, the most original new painting in the immense show.

In one way, of course, Ghost Painting is the last aesthetic whisper of the Morbid Manner and, with it, the dying fall of the vast, world-changing ambitions of modernism that lingered on into this decade. We ought to be discouraged by their loss. And yet it is hard not to have a sunny face after this Biennale. After the final no there comes a yes, the poet says, and on that yes the future world depends. The yes in this case turns out to be an affirmation
nothing more than the continued exis
tence of modern art, which, in its tips
absurdity, seems at least no more absu
or tipsy than our own. That Roy Lic
tenstein continues his cartoon par
phrases long after the joke has becor
achingly familiar, that Agnes Mart
continues to make her careful past
marks, that Brice Marden continues
make his careless one—that the ente
prise *continues*—is, in itself, reason f
hope.

It used to be possible, even plausib
to talk about avant-garde art as offic
culture, the international lingua fran
of the upper classes. There was a m
ment, between the lifting of the o
world order and the arrival of the ne
one, when it seemed as if the avan
garde might become the new comm
language—a moment between the rei
of the Strategic Air Command and t
reign of Rupert Murdoch when
looked as if Marcel Duchamp might
the gap, and you could think th
avant-garde art had become official c
ture. But in the past five years the wo
has changed more decisively than
easily recognize. The television in yo
hotel room on the Grand Canal sho
the "world" editions of NBC a
CNN; the weather over Europe is co
ing to you via Atlanta; it is Ka
Couric's smile that engirdles the glo
Now modern art, at least, looks res
tant just by being itself. Like Veni
which became more beautiful and m
moving after it lost its empire and
raison d'être—so that now, sinking u
der the weight of mass tourism, it co
hardly be lovelier—modern art's b
argument for its continued existence
mains that it exists. Every two years,
critics arrive, to scold the city and
new art inside it: *This won't do; you c*
go on this way, you know. But they d

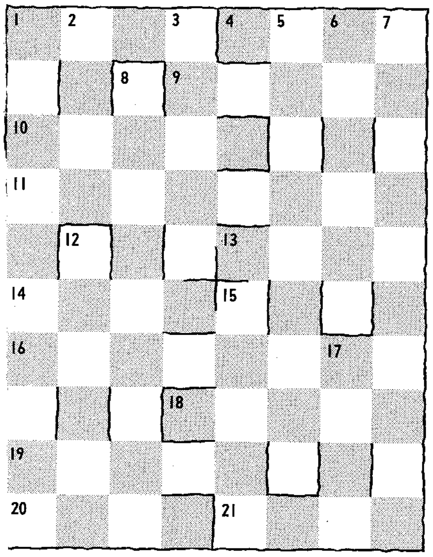
THERE'LL ALWAYS BE AN ENGLAN

[*From the London Times*]

Seven spectators and 11 competitors w
injured yesterday at the annual cheese-roll
contest at Cooper's Hill, Brockworth,
Gloucester. The most seriously injured w
man who suffered head injuries in a 10
fall down the hillside, as he tried to avo
bouncing 8lb. Double Gloucester that
rolled off course. The winners of two r
later found that their cheeses had been sto

8 X 10 CRYPTIC

NO. 6 BY FRASER SIMPSON



ACROSS

1 Sandwich shop lied freely (4)
4 Back rests extend between supports (4)
9 Because of two-piano composition, start to object (3,2)
10 Shared skewer holding piece of lamb (5)
11 Huge lasso returned after pair of cowboys left (8)
13 Mrs. Kennedy got up (4)
14 Auditor's cry cut short (4)
16 A sort of dancing light ahead of army officer (8)
18 Thick liquid stuff contains energy (5)
19 Contests populations (5)
20 Pavarotti's three kilometre journey (4)
21 Need revamped garden (4)

OWN

1 Embarrassment from Disco Dancing shirt (10)
2 Sexpot stripped Montreal player (4)
3 I do it foolishly! (5)
5 Staff for each boy Len raised (9)
6 Relaxed in consulate, as expected (2,4)
7 Ladies vote against botched sign (10)
8 A weapon has low fee (9)
12 Nab talk-radio participant for the audience (6)
15 Five Gaelic poems (5)
17 Message from Rome: Beware collapse (4)

• •

The solution to puzzle No. 5 appears on ge 34. For a free copy of "The New Yorker's ide to Solving Cryptic Crosswords," please send ur fax number or a stamped, self-addressed elope to "Solvers' Guide," The New Yorker, West 43rd Street, New York, N. Y. 10036.

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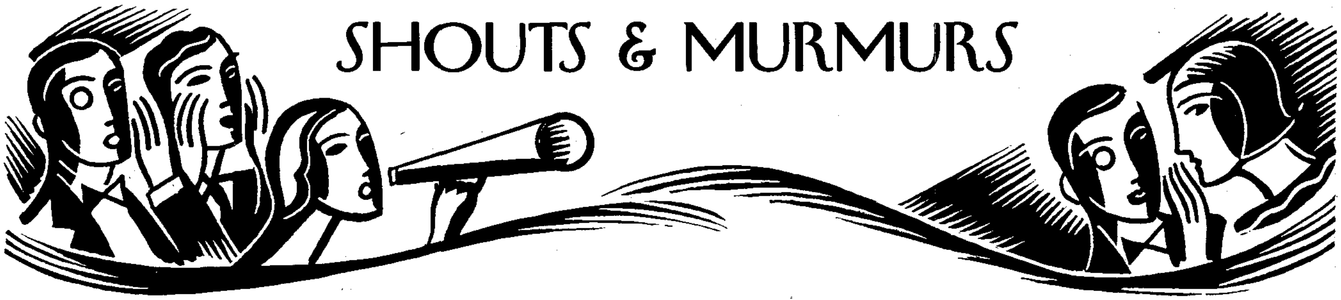


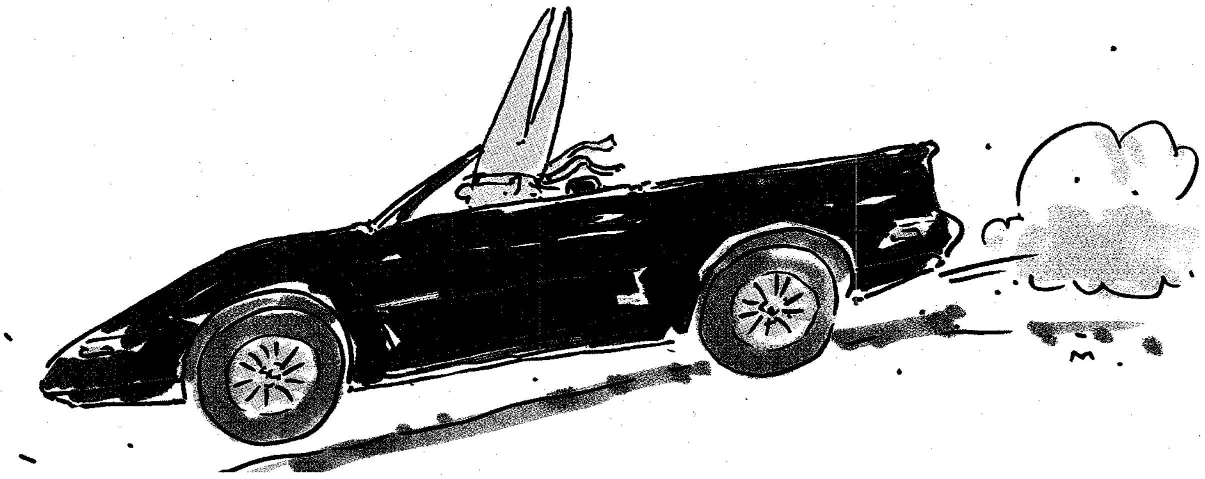
SHOUTS & MURMURS

POPE MOBILITY

BY FRANK GANNON

"Finally, a new car!"—*Pope John Paul II, on the delivery of his customized Popemobile.*

AFTER a long day of speaking ex cathedra, washing the feet of the poor, blessing huge crowds en masse, rebuffing the Prince of Darkness, and just catching up on phone calls, the Supreme Pontiff likes to get behind the wheel and head for the open road. The open road. Where the only cardinals around have wings, and they don't genuflect.



When you are infallible in the area of faith, you know how to pick an automobile. You're tough but fair. You want a car that is so responsive it can read your mind, even when that mind is written in Latin.

What does luxury mean to a man who decides what's right and wrong for most of the civilized world? It means a lot. It means details like fine burled-walnut panelling. It means a memory-controlled adjustable front seat with enough memory for the entire Baltimore Catechism. It means controls placed at precise, strategic points, because when twenty thousand people gather under your window on a regular basis you're a man who relies on convenience. You want a car that understands that the man who has to tell those twenty thousand people about the immorality of using birth control doesn't need any additional hassle.

Some car dealers make a lot of noise about standards. With our best-known customer, we can afford to be a little quieter. In truth, the Pope doesn't have to live up to anyone's standards. The man has standards of his own—standards that cast a big shadow, amigo. Meditate on these features: leather as meticulously detailed as a papal encyclical; thirty-eight valves that sound as mellow as monks chanting some of that Gregorian stuff; and a warranty as infallible as . . . Well, you get the picture.

But not everybody is in a state of grace. There are a lot of people out there looking to go to Hell without waiting in line. Stealing the Pope's car is just the ticket. Too bad. They're going to have to wait behind everybody else with a big pile of mortal sins, because the Pontiff's ride has the best car-protection device ever created. A remarkable computer chip is embedded directly in the ignition. If anybody other than the Pope tries to start the engine, the chip sends an electronically encrypted signal straight to the Vatican. Any would-be car thief with antipapal designs is going to find himself surrounded by a legion of hairy Swiss Guards before he can even think about where to take the big man's wheels.

And forget the Four Horses of the Apocalypse. You've got three hundred and twenty under the hood, and they're muc more refined. They don't know what wa famine, pestilence, and death are, but they met them on the highway they blow right past them.

Power. What does it mean to you? nice table at a popular restaurant? Cente orchestra tickets for the new Andre Lloyd Webber musical? Maybe just t power to make sure that none of yo loved ones ever have to ride behind a lo ging truck? To one man, it means t power to forgive sins for the entire st of New Jersey, and that's just before lun Later, he might forgive the whole E Coast. Maybe throw in California. May even forgive a man they call Nixon.

Now that's power.

The Pope's car personifies power. Pow Pontiff. Personify. Pope. They all st with the letter "P." And when you them coming, discretion says, bless you self and get in the right lane. The left l is reserved for the "P" team.

If you are the type of driver satisf by the merely worthy, maybe this isn't you. But if you want the ethereal feel of seraphim and cherubim frolicking high, there's really no alternative. Af all, when it comes to automobiles, if can't trust the Pope, who can you trust

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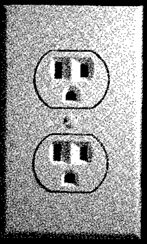

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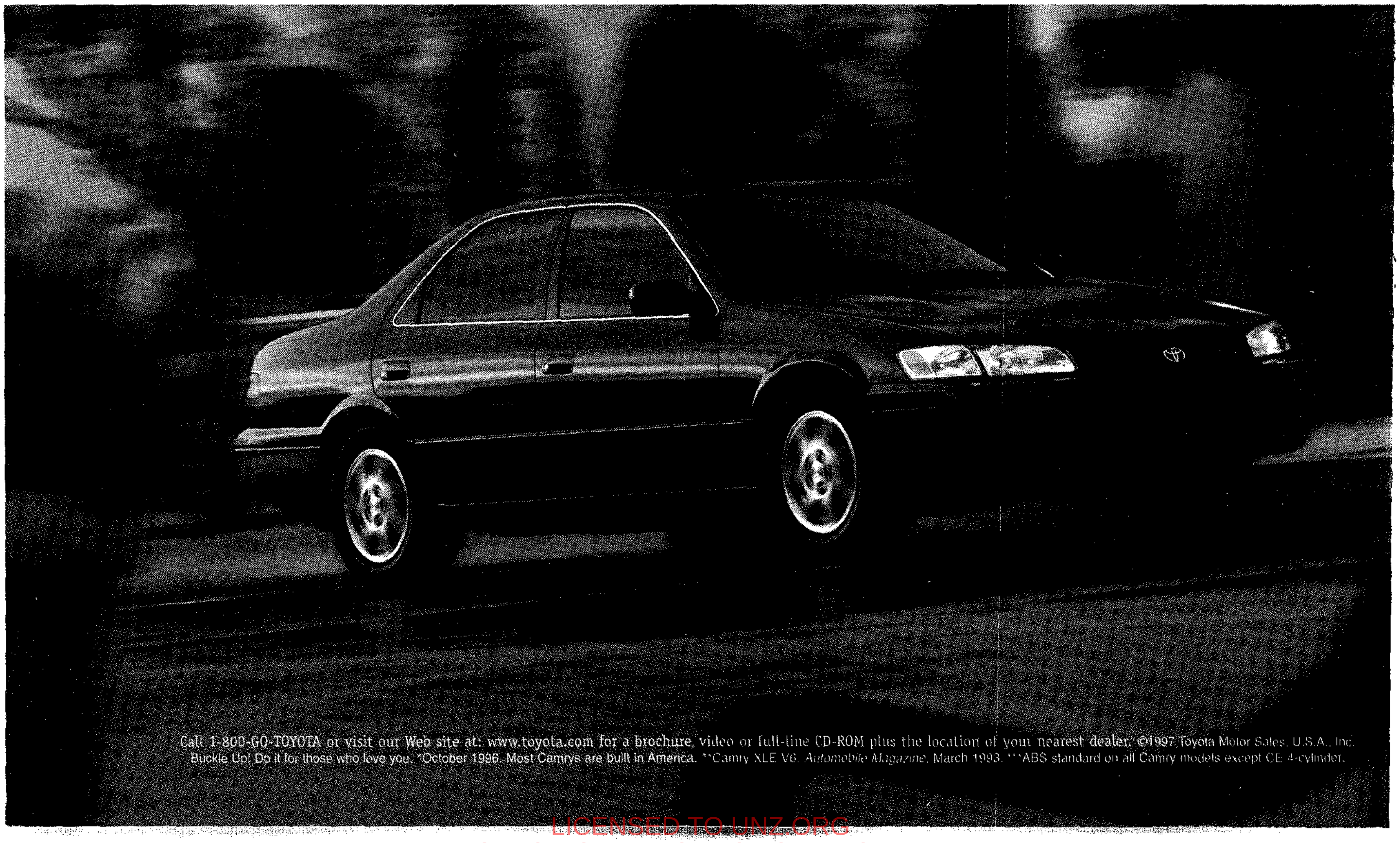

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